Booklist

Leading book discovery

Vol. 119 No. 12
2/15/23

Spotlight on **Middle-Grade Fiction**

Spotlight on **Book Discussions**

Cover art by Daniel Miyares, from *The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams*, by Daniel Nayeri (p.68)

ALA American Library Association

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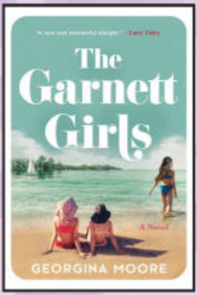
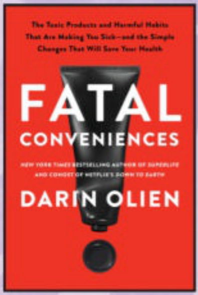
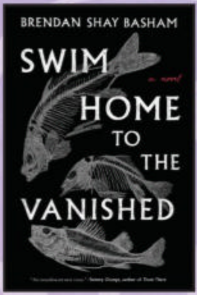
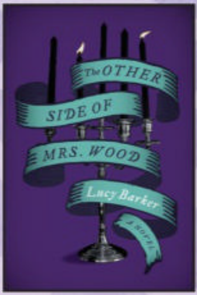
Showering You *with* Great Reads

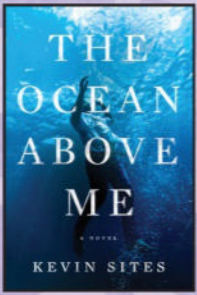
Two cities. Two spies. But which woman survives?
The War Pianist
A Novel
MANDY ROBOTHAM
USA TODAY BESTSELLER

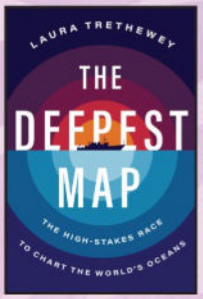

The Garnett Girls
A Novel
GEORGINA MOORE

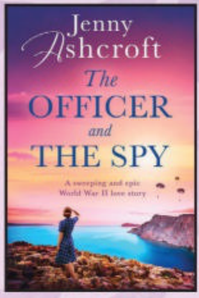

The Toxic Products and Harmful Habits That Are Making You Sick—and the Simple Changes That Will Save Your Health
FATAL CONVENIENCES
DARIN OLIEN

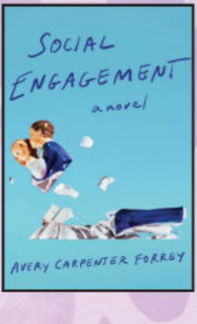

BRENDAN SHAY BASHAM
SWIM HOME TO THE VANISHED
a novel

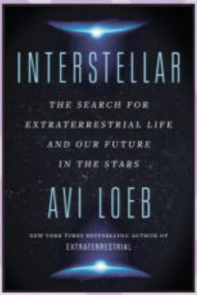

The OTHER SIDE OF MRS. WOOD
Lucy Barker
A NOVEL


THE OCEAN ABOVE ME
A NOVEL
KEVIN SITES


LAURA TRETHEWEY
THE DEEPEST MAP
THE HIGH-STAKES RACE TO CHART THE WORLD'S OCEANS


Jenny Ashcroft
The OFFICER and THE SPY
A sweeping and epic World War II love story


SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
a novel
AVERY CARPENTER FORREY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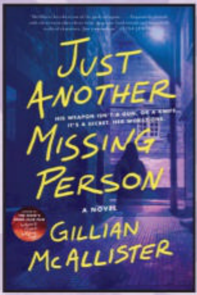
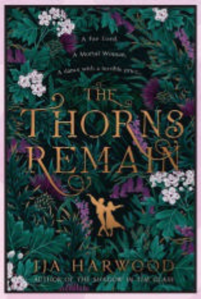
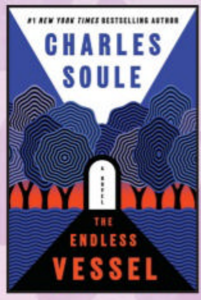
THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE AND OUR FUTURE IN THE STARS
AVI LOEB
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL


JUST ANOTHER MISSING PERSON
A NOVEL
GILLIAN McALLISTER

AFTER Anne
A Novel of Lucy Maud Montgomery
LOGAN STEINER


THE THORNS REMAIN
JJA HARWOOD

EVERYTHING ALL AT ONCE
STEPHANIE CATUDAL
A MEMOIR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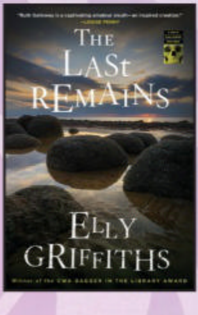
CHARLES SOULE
A NOVEL
THE ENDLESS VESSEL


The LASt REMAINS
ELLY GRIFFITHS

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A NOVEL
LISA HARDING

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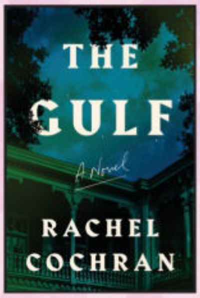
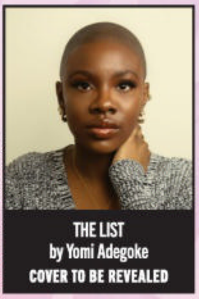
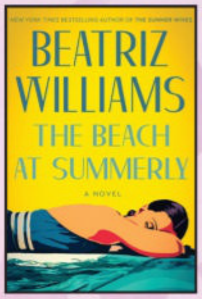
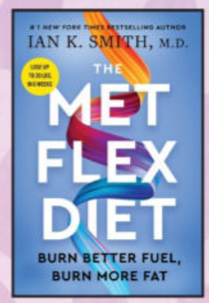
ERICA DICKERSON
A Good Mom's GUIDE TO MAKING Bad Choices


THE GULF
A Novel
RACHEL COCHRAN


THE LIST
by Yomi Adegoke
COVER TO BE REVEALED

CREDIT: MOLLANA BURKE


BEATRIZ WILLIAMS
THE BEACH AT SUMMERLY
A NOVEL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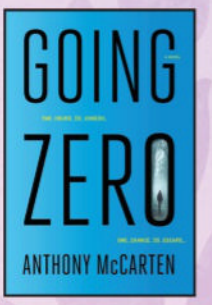
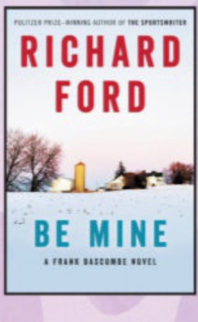
THE MET FLEX DIET
BURN BETTER FUEL, BURN MORE FAT


GOING ZERO
ANTHONY McCARTEN


RICHARD FORD
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A FRANK BASCOMBE NOVEL

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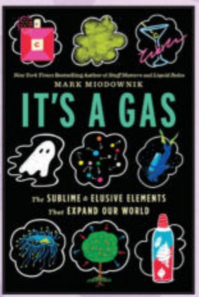
MARK MIODOWNIK
IT'S A GAS
The SUBLIME & ELUSIVE ELEMENTS That EXPAND OUR WORLD

ALONG CAME AMOR
by Alexis Daria
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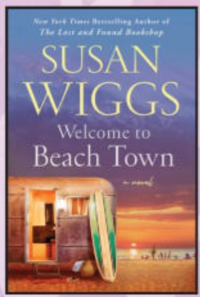
SUSAN WIGGS
Welcome to Beach Town
a novel

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by Beverly Jenkins
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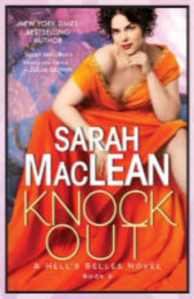
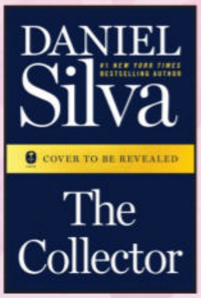

SARAH MACLEAN
KNOCKOUT
A HELL'S BELLES NOVEL


DANIEL Silva
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
COVER TO BE REVEALED
The Collector

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AFTER THAT NIGHT
by Karin Slaughter
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CREDIT: JOHN NOWAK

UNTITLED
by Anderson Cooper
COVER TO BE REVEALED

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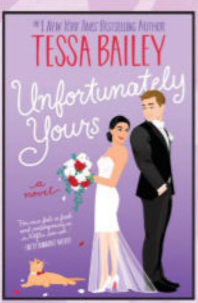
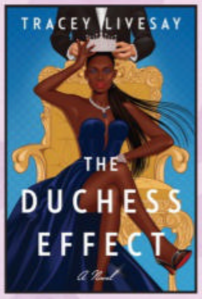
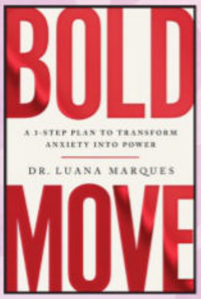
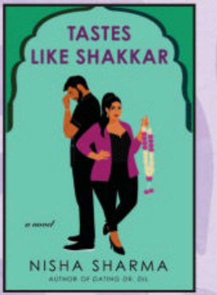
THE LITTLE LIAR
by Mitch Albom
COVER TO BE REVEALED


TESSA BAILEY
Unfortunately Yours
a novel


TRACEY LIVESAY
THE DUCHESS EFFECT
A Novel


BOLD MOVE
A 3-STEP PLAN TO TRANSFORM ANXIETY INTO POWER
DR. LUANA MARQUES

THE Fun Widow's BOOK TOUR
ZOE FISHMAN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a novel
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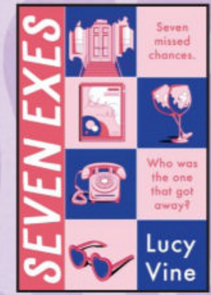
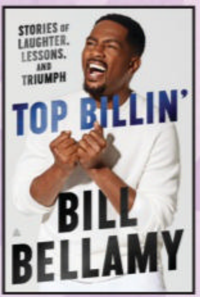
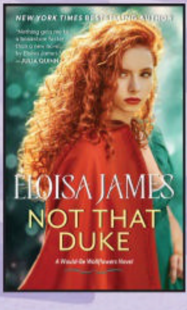

SEVEN EXES
Seven missed chances.
Who was the one that got away?
Lucy Vine

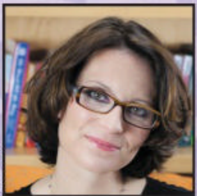
JENNIFER RYAN
Summer's Gift


STORIES OF LAUGHTER, LESSONS, AND TRIUMPH
TOP BILLIN'
BILL BELLAMY

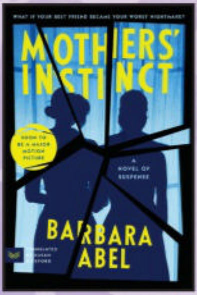
Love at First Set
JENNIFER DUGAN


ELOISA JAMES
NOT THAT DUKE

CREDIT: LISA DETULLIO


ENCHANTED TO MEET YOU
by Meg Cabot
COVER TO BE REVEALED

THE BRIGHTEST STAR
A NOVEL
GAIL TSUKIYAMA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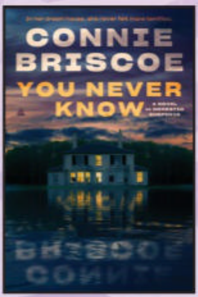
A NOVEL OF SUSPENSE
BARBARA ABEL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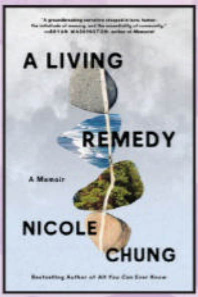
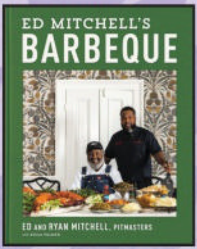
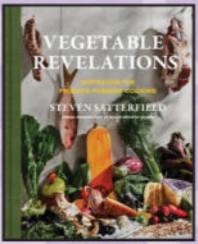
YOU NEVER KNOW


A LIVING REMEDY
A Memoir
NICOLE CHUNG


ED MITCHELL'S BARBEQUE
ED AND RYAN MITCHELL, PITMASTERS

For more information on these titles, go to:


VEGETABLE REVELATIONS
STEVEN SATTERFIELD

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February 15, 2023
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On the Cover

From *The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams,* by Daniel Nayeri and illustrated by Daniel Miyares, published by Levine Querido. Find a starred review of *The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams* in this issue's Spotlight on Middle-Grade Fiction. Illustration © 2023 by Daniel Miyares, used by permission of the publisher.

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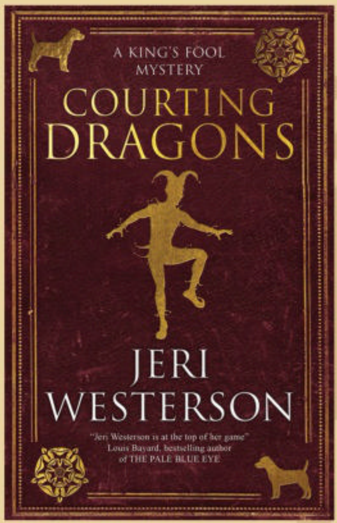
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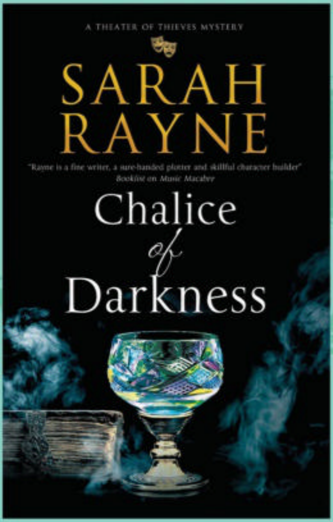
He may be Henry VIII's jester . . . but he's nobody's fool


A THEATER OF THIEVES MYSTERY
SARAH RAYNE
"Rayne is a fine writer, a sure-handed plotter and skillful character builder"
Booklist on Music Macabre
Chalice of Darkness

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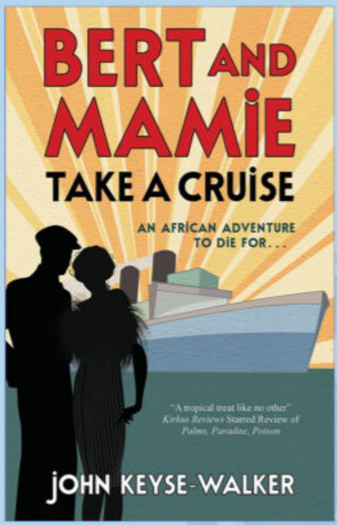
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AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE TO DIE FOR . . .
"A tropical treat like no other"
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JOHN KEYSE-WALKER

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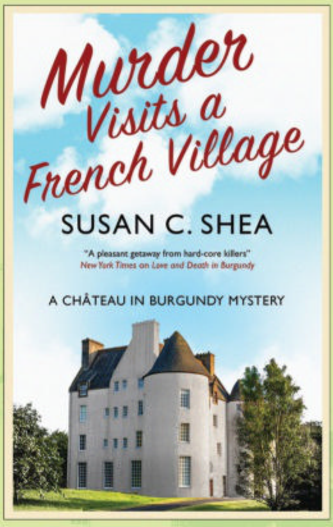
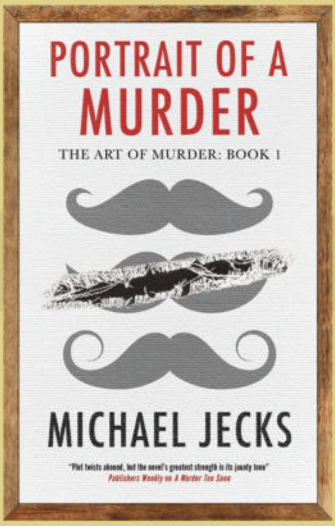

Murder Visits a French Village
SUSAN C. SHEA
"A pleasant getaway from hard-core killers"
New York Times on Love and Death in Burgundy
A CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY MYSTERY

A CHÂTEAU IN BURGUNDY MYSTERY

March 7 | 9781448310180 | HB

Ariel Shepard begins to suspect that her French village life will be anything but peaceful when a historian turns up dead in her moat


PORTRAIT OF A MURDER
THE ART OF MURDER: BOOK 1
MICHAEL JECKS
"Plot twists abound, but the novel's greatest strength is its jaunty tone"
Publishers Weekly on A Murder Too Soon

THE ART OF MURDER SERIES

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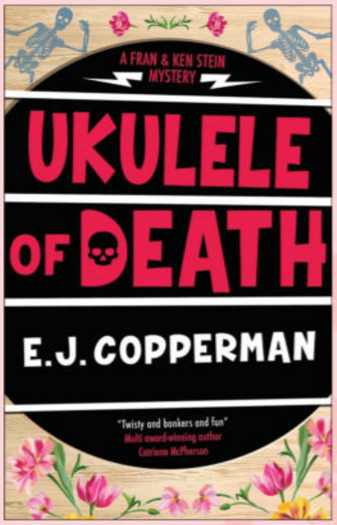
Struggling portrait artist Nick Morris becomes an accidental sleuth when his latest client turns up dead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A FRAN AND KEN STEIN MYSTERY

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Adult Nonfiction

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By Daniel M. Lavery.

Apr. 2023. 336p. HarperOne, $26.99 (9780063140363); e-book (9780063140387). 070.444.

Slate's advice-giving Prudence fields questions about relationships, work dilemmas, social faux pas, and just about everything else. Lavery (*Something That May Shock and Discredit You*, 2020) was the fourth Prudence, beginning in 2015 and passing the torch in 2021. Under his tenure, Prudie's advice was modern and informed but presented with enough of the gentility and clever turns of phrase of the classic advice-givers to endear the column to a wide readership. Collected here are some of his favorite letters with notes on those that kept him up at night, those he wished he'd answered differently, and those he still hopes had happy endings. The collection is organized thematically, and Lavery winds his own life experience through the commentary, including his estrangement from his family and his gender transition. As he transitioned mid-tenure, many questions involve transitioning or the LGBTQ+ community. Across the board, this retrospective is entertaining and comforting. Answers for those hurting are affirming, gentle, and knowledgeable, but for those on the other side, his wit is on full display and his biting responses satisfyingly pull no punches. —*Heather Booth*

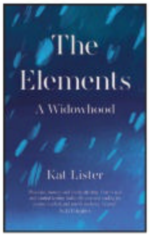
Philosophy & Psychology

The Elements: A Widowhood.

By Kat Lister.

Feb. 2023. 256p. Icon, paper, $16.95 (9781785787959). 155.937.

Before the age of 40, Kat Lister became a widow. After suffering a fall, her husband learned he had a tumor the size of a lemon growing steadily on the right side of his brain. He was diagnosed with oligoastrocytoma, cancer of the brain, and ultimately succumbed to the fatal illness in hospice care. The aftermath of his passing pushed Lister into a spiral of coping mechanisms. Told in paragraphs alternating between the last months of her husband's life and the early months of their relationship, Lister's debut memoir shares her inner thoughts regarding her love and loss. She breaks the timeline down further with four thematic sections based on the elements of fire, water, earth, and air. Philosophy, fairy tales, Greek mythology, and Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking* all find a place in Lister's thoughts as she navigates the grief process. The resulting book is a masterfully crafted exploration of what it means to lose the one you love, and one that holds the power to change those who read it. The author lays out her heartbreaking grief in poetic paragraphs that will stay with readers for days. —*BoDean Warnock*



Emotional Labor: The Invisible Work Shaping Our Lives and How to Claim Our Power.

By Rose Hackman.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Flatiron, $28.99 (9781250777355). 155.3.

It seems that women have always been in charge of keeping things on track for their boyfriends, husbands, children, and bosses. They're the ones who keep the house clean and the office running and drive the kids around. According to Hackman, this work, often unpaid and performed with a smile, is actually emotional labor. Although it tends to fall on women, restaurant servers, domestics, nursing aids, and low-level office staff are all required to provide these sorts of services. While admitting that this labor is necessary, Hackman contends that it shouldn't primarily fall on everyone except white males and that its profound value should be acknowledged and respected. Hackman goes back in history to show the evolution of emotional labor and how it became the province mostly of women. She includes interviews with a wide selection of emotional-labor suppliers, from stressed moms to sex workers. The keys to righting the balance, according to Hackman in this enlightening book, are to make these caregivers aware of their essentiality and to make sure that men understand the value of empathy and caring. —*Candace Smith*

Enchantment: Awakening Wonder in an Anxious Age.

By Katherine May.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Riverhead, $26 (9780593329993); e-book (9780593330012). 158.1.

After two years of COVID-19 restrictions, May, author of the best-selling *Wintering* (2020), seeks a return of enchantment and meaning. She finds she's unable to concentrate. She feels adrift and disconnected from those around her. Turning to the traditional four elements—earth, water, fire and air—May looks for ways to reconnect with the natural world and find a sense of community in her daily life. Holding smooth stones in her hand, she draws the feeling of solidity and heft from the earth. While swimming in the ocean, she feels at one with the water and her fellow swimmers. Burned out and unable to focus long enough to read after months of stress and caution, May ponders the power of fire to spark renewal. And finally, the author looks to the air and sky to find meaning in the stars. It's by returning to her roots in England's countryside and searching for enchantment in the everyday that May finally finds healing. Beautifully written and profoundly reasoned, this introspective search for meaning will appeal to readers seeking wholeness and community. —*Candace Smith*

How to Think like a Woman: Four Woman Philosophers Who Taught Me How to Love the Life of the Mind.

By Regan Penaluna.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Grove, $28 (9780802158802); e-book (9780802158819). 108.2.

This thought-provoking book unfolds in a double narrative. One is an engaging overview of the personal lives and intellectual pursuits of women philosophers from antiquity through modern day, a considerable achievement given ongoing efforts to erase or omit their names and contributions from the patriarchal canon. A second, equally compelling story line is author Penaluna's memoir. Penaluna first fell in love with philosophy as an undergrad. She married her graduate adviser and settled into a career in academia as a professor. Despite suffering from occasional bouts of self-doubt and impostor syndrome, she believed herself to be happy. Readers will be caught up in her dawning sense of self-realization as she delves further into her research, uncovering the wisdom of past women philosophers and their views on intellectual capability, self-determination, and notions of liberty. Galvanized, Penaluna devised a new life for herself: she left her husband, moved across the country, and found a new career in scientific journalism. Years, a new relationship, and two kids later, Penaluna participated in a literary evening dedicated to muses. This ignited a spark; Penaluna dug out her notebooks and started writing this book. Readers interested in both interior and exterior lives will be very happy that she did. —*Kathleen McBroom*

HOW TO THINK LIKE A WOMAN
REGAN PENALUNA

Where We Meet the World: The Story of the Senses.

By Ashley Ward.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Basic, $30 (9781541600850); e-book (9781541600867). 152.1.

You may think you're sensing the world as it is, but really, it's all in your head. In this fascinating exploration of the world of the senses, biologist Ward draws from a range of sciences to uncover how our perceptions intertwine with our emotions and behavior, as well as with the broader cultures around us. Far beyond sight, sound, taste, touch, and

YA Recommendations

Adult titles recommended for teens are marked with the following symbols: **YA,** for books of general YA interest; **YA/C,** for books with particular curricular value; and **YA/S,** for books that will appeal most to teens with a special interest in a specific subject.

smell, we may have as many as 53 categories of sense. Those include interoceptive senses that reveal what's happening inside our bodies, and proprioception, which allows us to be aware of the position of each of our body parts. Ward enthusiastically collects examples from the animal kingdom, research, and history to illustrate how we've developed our big five senses. Along the way, we learn that Olympians wearing red in combat sports win more often than expected; that humans can distinguish far more individual smells than hear different tones or see different colors; and that our sex and age affect our senses in many ways. Enjoy this journey to the limits of what we know about our convincing, marvelous world of illusion. —*Bridget Thoreson*

Religion

The Book of Nature: The Astonishing Beauty of God's First Sacred Text.

By Barbara Mahany.

Mar. 2023. 191p. Broadleaf, $27.99 (9781506473512). 200.

Writing with a nurse's foundation, a scientist's eye, a theologian's mind, and a poet's soul, journalist Mahany (*Stillness of Winter*, 2020) contemplates God's presence as revealed in nature, His "first sacred text." Tracing the Judeo-Christian belief that scripture succeeds and augments nature by directing humanity to knowledge of the divine, Mahany looks to nature itself, marveling at its intricacies and blending scientific facts with literary descriptions that all point unquestionably to a grand designer worthy of worship. She incorporates literary writing by a host of essayists and poets (Annie Dillard, Henry David Thoreau, Mary Oliver, Walt Whitman) and Christian and Jewish religious writers as well as Islamic, Greek, Chinese, Celtic, and Indigenous traditions. She implores readers to continue reading the book and not to allow the noise of modern life to obscure its message. Supplemental material includes an annotated list of recommended reading and an extensive bibliography. Mahany's lyrical, thoughtful, most recent work beautifully complements her shelf of awe-inspired books about nature and will appeal to fans of Shauna Niequist and Anne Lamott. —*Karen Clements*

The Transcendent Brain: Spirituality in the Age of Science.

By Alan Lightman.

Mar. 2023. 208p. Pantheon, $26 (9780593317419). 215.

Acclaimed physicist and writer Lightman (*Probable Impossibilities*, 2021) has always had a scientific view of the world. His innate curiosity led him to conduct countless experiments as a young boy and set him on the path to becoming a renowned physicist. That same curiosity produced wonder and awe over what Lightman calls transcendent experiences, such as appreciation of beauty, falling in love, and a sense of connection to nature. The scientific worldview is one of materialism, stating that everything is made of atoms and molecules and that they're governed by a finite number of natural, fundamental laws. Lightman shows that these immutable physical laws are actually not incompatible with transcendent experiences but, indeed, are part of what makes us human. While these experiences vary greatly, we frequently gather them under the rubric of spirituality. The realm where scientific reasoning collides with the unexplainable sublime is that of spiritual materialism. Lightman writes with passion and panache about how the search for knowledge need not inhibit moments of transcendence, offering a poignant reminder that wonder is everywhere, if we only look. —*Bill Kelly*

Social Sciences

Biting the Hand: Growing Up Asian in Black and White America.

By Julia Lee.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Holt, $26.99 (9781250824677); e-book (9781250824660). 305.895.

The Korean concept of han captures a condition of sorrow and rage that echoes through generations, the legacy of a long history of invasion and war. Lee, the daughter of Korean immigrants to California, grapples with this inheritance as a member of the so-called model minority in this clear-sighted memoir humming with justified anger. Her parents immigrated in the early 1970s after her father's harrowing escape across the North Korean border, bringing the anxieties of war into their new lives. Lee recounts milestones on her journey to reject the insidious exclusionary culture of white supremacy in modern American society, from her childhood audition for the role of a Vietnamese boat child on *Designing Women*, to her experience as a teenager of the racial uprisings in L.A. after the Rodney King verdict, to the overt racism she encountered at Princeton. She untangles the complexities of existing outside the Black/white racial binary that has long defined American society, powerfully calling on anyone who has felt invisible to aid in the dismantling of the existing power structure. —*Bridget Thoreson*

YA: *This coming-of-age memoir by a Korean American will speak strongly to teen readers. BT.*

Bootstrapped: Liberating Ourselves from the American Dream.

By Alissa Quart.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Ecco, $28.99 (9780063028005); e-book, $14.99 (9780063028029). 330.

Informed by the COVID-19 pandemic's magnification of our national inequalities, Quart picks at the threads of the American dream to reveal a richer tapestry, where interdependence and cooperation support the entire community. The idea of being able to "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" is patently absurd, opines Quart, in a nation where 60 percent of wealth is inherited, tracing this myth from Emerson and Horatio Alger to the cover of *Forbes* trumpeting Kylie Jenner's status as a "self-made" billionaire. Quart probes invisible privilege and the effects of programs like the Homestead Act, which provided white Americans with generational wealth while others must now rely on a "dystopian social safety net" filled with entrenched bureaucracies that make getting aid difficult, humiliating, and/or impossible. She then contributes ideas from already existing volunteer, mutual-aid, and participatory-budgeting organizations that combat these racial, social, and economic inequalities to create a more just world. *Bootstrapped* asks readers to begin by simply questioning the dominant narrative of the go-it-alone American success story. Recommended for fans of Matthew Desmond's *Evicted*, Linda Tirado's *Hand to Mouth*, and Barbara Ehrenreich's *Bright-Sided*. —*Erin Downey Howerton*

Bottoms Up and the Devil Laughs: A Journey through the Deep State.

By Kerry Howley.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Knopf, $28 (9780525655497). 352.3.

In this wide-ranging, often chilling survey, Howley (*Thrown*, 2014) meditates on the ways in which data collected by U.S. government agencies can be used to invade and destroy the lives of citizens. At the heart of her exposé is Reality Winner ("Her real name, let's move past it now"). Winner served as a linguist and surveillance expert with a high security clearance in the U.S. Air Force, and then as a consultant in a firm from which she leaked a document about possible Russian interference in the U.S. elections—a leak that earned her the longest sentence ever handed down for an Espionage Act conviction. In a sometimes rambling but always provocative narrative, which also covers "American Taliban" member John Walker Lindh and others accused of espionage, Howley makes a convincing argument that Winner was convicted less for the leak than for misleading evidence from old social media posts and personal texts, written playfully but interpreted as serious, and suggests that we all might be subject to danger from the same sort of posts, preserved without our knowledge in government databases. —*Margaret Quamme*

Building Back Truth in an Age of Misinformation.

By Leslie F. Stebbins.

Mar. 2023. 206p. Rowman & Littlefield, $34 (9781538163146); e-book (9781538163153). 302.23.

There has been a notable decline in trust in institutions like the police, government, medical systems, and more over the past decades, especially since the launch of the World Wide Web. Digital worlds promote misinformation, erode our understanding of the world, and compromise our access to the truth. Stebbins, an independent researcher and the director of Research4Ed, sheds light on the topic of misinformation and offers six paths forward to create digital spaces that prioritize the public and improve information quality: understanding how platforms are designed to exploit us, embracing agency in our interactions with digital spaces, building tools to reduce harmful practices, requiring platform companies to prioritize public good, repairing journalism, and strengthening curation to promote trusted content. She also delves into the causes of misinformation, such as a focus on profits over public value. Stebbins presents a well-researched argument, writing with an air of hope for a future of reform, improved policies, and public engagement. This book will appeal to a wide range of readers, especially teachers and students, legislators, and those in journalism and communication fields. —*Jennifer Adams*

Carmageddon: How Cars Make Life Worse and What to Do about It.

By Daniel Knowles.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Abrams, $28 (9781419758805). 388.3.

Journalist Knowles offers a fresh look at the impact of the automobile. The book opens in Chicago, where a neighborhood-centric, walkable city with public transportation was slowly demolished to build roads and make way for cars. Knowles says it's that kind of thinking that has caused sprawl and the inability to navigate without automobiles. Other viable options have been overlooked, and cars have become a detriment to humans and the environment. He notes that cars cause what economists call "externalities," costs imposed on others by one's decisions. Some of these costs include overuse of natural resources, illness caused by air pollution, and traffic accidents. Another challenge is to get people to think differently about transportation, because the default is that "it's easy to drive." Knowles points out better ways to live without cars, such as in New York, Copenhagen, and Tokyo, all cities which rely on mass transit, walking, and biking. Readers will find this perspective enlightening and maybe they'll think twice the next time they think of hopping in their cars. —*Jennifer Adams*

Crooked: The Roaring '20s Tale of a Corrupt Attorney General, a Crusading Senator, and the Birth of the American Political Scandal.

By Nathan Masters.

Mar. 2023. 384p. Hachette, $30 (9780306826139). 324.

It was the first big scandal of American politics—the first to capture the attention of the entire nation and points beyond. The attorney general was ruthless Harry Daugherty, who almost single-handedly put Warren G. Harding into the White House. The senator was the idealistic Burton Wheeler, who was determined to expose the corrupt AG and remove him from power. The catalyst was the death of a man named Jess Smith, a well-known political fixer and Daugherty's close friend (and, it was rumored, lover). Smith's apparent suicide set off a chain of events that was, for many Americans, an eye-opening introduction to the dark side of politics. Although the events took place many decades ago, the story is as timely now as it ever was, and Masters brings it to pulsing life. Wheeler, Daugherty, and the various supporting players (including J. Edgar Hoover, before the world knew who he was) emerge as fully fleshed out people, and the story is as exciting as any political thriller. —*David Pitt*

Deadly Quiet City: True Stories from Wuhan.

By Murong Xuecun.

Mar. 2023. 320p. New Press, $27.99 (9781620977927). 305.4092.

Fear—of a novel virus, an oppressive government, and death—is the common denominator in this tragic account constructed from interviews about the many hardships brought on by the COVID-19 outbreak and strictly enforced Chinese lockdowns at the start of the pandemic. Prominent Chinese writer Murong Xuecun portrays ordinary people living in hellish Wuhan, a place where Orwell's *1984* and Kafka's immense bureaucracies intersect. Pneumonia, paranoia, and a preoccupation with death exhaust (and sometimes annihilate) the city's people. A doctor becomes infected with COVID-19 when a patient coughs in his face, but he continues treating others. A devoted mother's daughter dies alone in the ICU. A dissident fights to illuminate the truth. A motorcycle taxi operator ferries folks illegally and dangerously during lockdown. A middle-class man who trusts the government contracts COVID-19. All Chinese citizens have a "personal QR code." When a highly contagious and deadly virus surge occurs in a totalitarian society, the chances for any sort of happy ending are pretty slim. These stories of suffering, propaganda, and abolition of personal freedoms will inform, sadden, and enrage readers. —*Tony Miksanek*

The Donora Death Fog: Clean Air and the Tragedy of a Pennsylvania Mill Town.

By Andy McPhee.

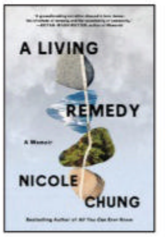
Mar. 2023. 296p. illus. Univ. of Pittsburgh, paper, $24.95 (9780822966715). 363.7392.

Donora, Pennsylvania, a town south of Pittsburgh, was incorporated and developed in the early twentieth century by industrialists William H. Donner and Andrew Mellon. In October 1948, the town made headlines around the world for a tragedy that would ultimately bring about much-needed industrial reform. A temperature inversion, in which warmer air traps cooler air, combined with the smoke from steel and zinc processing plants, led to cause a near-suffocating smog that wreaked havoc on residents for five days. Author McPhee rivetingly recounts the minute-by-minute events in harrowing detail, as affected residents felt symptoms ranging from a tickle in the throat to severe breathing problems. Emergency services couldn't stay on top of the fusillade of calls, and 21 souls would be lost in the catastrophe—and accountability sought in its wake. Skillfully highlighting the bravery of the men and women who aided the afflicted and prevented the calamity from claiming more lives, McPhee offers a retelling of real-life drama that's both compelling and horrific from beginning to end. —*Philip Zozzaro*

A Living Remedy.

By Nicole Chung.

Apr. 2023. 288p. Ecco, $28.99 (9780063031616); e-book (9780063031630). 362.734089092.



"You're not famous," Chung's mother innocently commented when Chung began writing *All You Can Ever Know* (2018), her transcendent memoir about her identity as a transracial Korean adoptee. "Do you think anyone is going to read it?" Her mother need not have worried; Chung's debut is a lauded best-seller. Five years later, Chung applies the same incisive intimacy with which she explored her reconnection with her birth family in her first book to examine her profound relationships with her white adoptive parents. Born severely premature in Seattle, Chung was nurtured in a loving home in homogeneous small-town Oregon. By high school, the family "no longer lived *paycheck to paycheck*, as my mother had once told me, but emergency to emergency." They managed to provide a comfortable (enough) upbringing until Chung left for college on the East Coast where stark socioeconomic differences demanded careful navigation. Chung stayed East, married, had two daughters; rare were her visits home but steadfast was the mutual devotion. Illness, exacerbated by an inadequate health-care system, claimed her father at 67. Her mother faced her loss with hope, but she died at 68 while the global pandemic prevented final goodbyes. Chung's prose hones her grief into razor-sharp insights even as her words interrogate, honor, and celebrate the unbreakable bonds of parenthood. —*Terry Hong*

A Madman's Will: John Randolph, Four Hundred Slaves, and the Mirage of Freedom.

By Gregory May.

Apr. 2023. 384p. illus. Norton/Liveright, $30 (9781324092216). 328.7309.

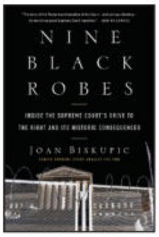
May, a historian and attorney, reveals that John Randolph, an early-nineteenth-century Virginia slaveholder and senator who actively promoted state's rights and pro-slavery policies, wrote a will that freed 400 enslaved people at Roanoke, his plantation. May's biography of Randolph includes sketches of friends and family, accounts of the lives of enslaved and free African Americans in the South and North, antebellum views of madness, and accounts of legal battles. The court cases arose from Randolph's family's eagerness to profit from his estate, disagreements over whether Randolph was mentally competent to write a will, and confusion over the existence of multiple wills. May also chronicles the continued travails experienced by the enslaved people on Randolph's plantation even after the courts affirmed that Randolph intended to free them as well as life on the

American frontier, where the freed men and women hoped to settle. Two appendices and a time line will help readers follow May's detailed illumination of significant events not found in most American histories. This is an invaluable narrative that sheds light on present-day struggles for racial justice and debates about reparations. —*John Rowen*

Nine Black Robes: Inside the Supreme Court's Drive to the Right and Its Historic Consequences.

By Joan Biskupic.

Apr. 2023. 432p. Morrow, $32.99 (9780063052789); e-book (9780063052802). 347.73.



CNN legal analyst and veteran SCOTUS journalist Biskupic follows her previous biographies of Supreme Court justices, including *The Chief* (2019), with an up-to-the-minute, laser-focused examination of the Court as a whole during what is arguably its most contentious and controversial iteration to date. For much of its history, the Court has operated behind a cloak of public anonymity. That all changed with the pandemic, forcing justices to meet remotely and making their real-time deliberations available to the public. What was revealed was a surprising and disquieting level of personal animosity and ideological incompatibility that manifested in narrow rulings with wide-reaching consequences. Biskupic trenchantly displays the scope of political hypocrisy undermining the Court, from Senator Mitch McConnell's stonewalling of Merrick Garland's nomination to his steamrolling of Amy Coney Barrett's investiture just days before the 2020 election. Combined with Trump's previous appointments of ultra-conservative judges Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanagh, the seismic shifts potentially undermining the Court's constitutional mission were cemented in place. Biskupic's keen overview of current Supreme Court dynamics and projected judicial legacy illustrates the inherent tensions between personalities, the undue influence of politics, and the alarming concentration of power resting within an institution vulnerable to outside forces. Devoted Court-watchers will devour this behind-the-scenes expose. —*Carol Haggas*

Once upon a Tome: The Misadventures of a Rare Bookseller.

By Oliver Darkshire.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Norton, $27.95 (9781324092070). 381.45002.

Though in possession of a name befitting a Dickens character, Oliver Darkshire's path to the hallowed halls of antiquaria was by no means prescribed. Rather, the self-described introvert with narcoleptic tendencies and misanthropic inclinations was without promising prospects until a grant-funded apprenticeship landed him a tiny desk just inside the door of the iconic antiquarian London bookseller, Sotheran's. Reader, he found his calling. Our amiable Virgil guides us through the many vagaries of antiquarian bookselling, including eccentric customers identified as either Smaugs, Draculas, or Cryptids by the staff. Some individual specimens earn specific monikers, such as the Spindelman and the Ancient. We are also introduced to Darkshire's quirky colleagues, affectionately portrayed in all of their eccentricities in descriptions that read like *The Office* penned by the same hand as *The Pickwick Papers*, while the accounting department is straight out of *Bleak House*. Anecdotes abound, and myriad misadventures are afoot, often resembling Indiana Jones' more than Tom Jones'. Darkshire is a charming and witty guide in this biblio-bildungsroman of finding one's tribe. —*Bill Kelly*

Quitting: A Life Strategy: The Myth of Perseverance—and How the New Science of Giving Up Can Set You Free.

By Julia Keller.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Grand Central/Balance, $29 (9781538722343); e-book (9781538722367). 300.

Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist and author of the Bell Elkins mystery series, Keller argues that quitting is often a smart strategy. Take, for example, the seed-eating finches of the Galapagos Islands. When they encounter seeds that are too difficult to extract, do they persevere, displaying grit and determination to get the seeds, no matter the effort? They do not. In the game of survival, it can be advantageous to move on. Human brains and bodies are similarly designed to tell us when it's time to let go, but this instinct is often overpowered by cultural messages like, "quitters never win, winners never quit." Keller pushes back on the cult of grit, drawing on scientific research, personal experience, and popular narratives, like the iconic moment in the film *Office Space* when Jennifer Aniston flips off her manager and walks out of a soul-crushing job. Captain Ahab, on the other hand, is a tragic figure precisely because of his inability to give up. Keller includes exercises, called permission slips, to help readers with their own strategic quitting, making this book practical and enlightening. —*Freda Love Smith*

The Undertow: Scenes from a Slow Civil War.

By Jeff Sharlet.

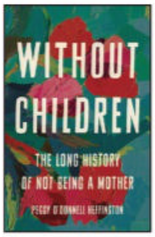
Mar. 2023. 302p. Norton, $28.95 (9781324006497). 320.

The insurrection on January 6, 2021, did not spring forth from Trump's forehead fully formed and ready for battle like Athena, sporting conspiracy theories instead of wisdom. Anger on the far right had been building for years before Trump's candidacy. Journalist Sharlet (*This Brilliant Darkness*, 2020) is the tour guide for the "Trumpocene," reporting from the lion's den of Trump rallies, fundamentalist churches, "the manosphere," seedy internet spaces, and prosperity gospel tent revivals. Traveling through the interior of divided America and asking people about the potential for civil war, Sharlet blends reportage with philosophical meditations and many clever turns of phrase. He identifies the titular undercurrent of fascism, rage, and paranoia backed by huge stockpiles of guns and organized by greedy charlatans masquerading as men of God and self-proclaimed militia leaders who threaten the very existence of American democracy. Sharlet also looks into the self-caused martyrdom of Ashli Babbitt, shot on January 6 inside the Capitol, and her significance to insurrectionist lore. This is a grim but necessary examination of democracy's potential assassins, leavened by Sharlet's incredible storytelling and acute observations. —*James Pekoll*

Without Children: The Long History of Not Being a Mother.

By Peggy O'Donnell Heffington.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Seal, $30 (9781541675575). 305.42.



Contrary to the current belief that being child-free is a new trend, there have always been people who choose not to have children, says historian Heffington. In this well-researched and compellingly readable history on not-motherhood, she devotes sections to each of the historical and current reasons women do not have children, spanning from economic oppression, climate change, or lack of community support to infertility or career prioritization. *Without Children* explores the ever-widening societal divide between mothers and nonmothers and argues for the dissolution of this divide. This argument is based upon a central, century-spanning treatise: regardless of her reasons or the societal context, a woman's choice to bear or not bear children should be her own. Heffington invites the reader to explore motherhood and nonmotherhood through diverse philosophical perspectives from the likes of Simone de Beauvoir and bell hooks and through the experiences of individuals like eighteenth-century English cleric Thomas Malthus, civil rights activist Ella Baker, and nineteenth-century New York City abortion provider Madame Restell. *Without Children* will interest readers engaged with intersectional feminist thought and women's rights in a wide variety of contexts. —*Julia Maxwell*

Business

The Big Con: How the Consulting Industry Weakens Our Businesses, Infantilizes Our Governments, and Warps Our Economies.

By Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Penguin, $28 (9780593492673); e-book (9780593492680). 658.421.

Mazzucato and Collington (of the University College London Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose) offer a thoughtful analysis of the effects of exponential growth in the

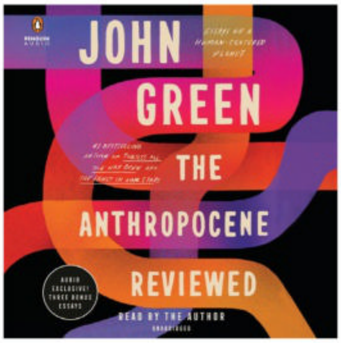
Continued on p.10

Art from Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes.*

Reading and Listening Together

Print and Audio Standouts

by Heather Booth, Annie Bostrom, Susan Maguire, and Donna Seaman



All the Flowers Kneeling
PAUL TRAN

SABRINA & CORINA
stories
KALI FAJARDO-ANSTINE

With the hope of including as many participants as possible in book discussions, while also expanding and deepening reading and listening experiences, we recommend these outstanding works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, organized by theme or genre. Each work reveals different dimensions in print and audio and each format illuminates the other in fresh and stimulating ways that will inspire lively discussions.

Eerie Tales

The audio versions really amp up the chills of these suspenseful tales, which cover such discussable topics as colonialism, Japanese and Japanese American internment during WWII, surveillance technology and start-ups, a personal quest to solve a crime, and racism in classical music.

The Daughter of Doctor Moreau. By Silvia Moreno-Garcia. 2022. Del Rey (9780593355336). Audio read by Gisela Chípe. Books on Tape (9780593610015).

The Fervor. By Alma Katsu. 2022. Putnam (9780593328330. Audio read by Traci Kato-Kiriyama and Louis Ozawa. Books on Tape (9780593552421).

One by One. By Ruth Ware. 2020. Scout (9781501188824). Audio read by Imogene Church. Simon & Schuster Audio (9781797111360).

Trailed: One Woman's Quest to Solve the Shenandoah Murders. By Kathryn Miles. 2022. Algonquin (9781616209094). Audio read by Gabra Zackman. Workman (9781649040992).

The Violin Conspiracy. By Brendan Slocumb. 2022. Anchor (9780593315415). Audio read by JD Jackson and Brendan Slocumb. Books on Tape (9780593554975).

Essays and Memoirs

These are candid personal disclosures and thoughtful, ardent, and wry inquiries into social, political, and artistic issues and experiences, direct and intimate musings both in print and in each author's spoken voice.

The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on a Human-Centered Planet. By John Green. 2021. Dutton (9780525556534). Audio read by the author. Books on Tape (9780593408544).

Crying in H Mart. By Michelle Zauner. 2021. Knopf (9780525657743). Audio read by the author. Books on Tape (9780593153901).

A Farewell to Gabo and Mercedes: A Son's Memoir of Gabriel Garcia Márquez and Mercedes Barcha. By Rodrigo Garcia. 2021. HarperVia (9780063158337). Audio read by the author. HarperAudio (9780063158344).

Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir. By Natasha Trethewey. 2020. Ecco (9780063005860). Audio read by the author. Harper (9780063005860).

Sigh, Gone: A Misfit's Memoir of Great Books, Punk Rock, and the Fight to Fit In. By Phuc Tran. 2020. Flatiron (9781250194718). Audio read by the author. Macmillan (9781250261236).

This Is Major: Notes on Diana Ross, Dark Girls, and Being Dope. By Shayla Lawson. 2020. HarperPerennial (9780062890597). Audio read by the author. Harper (9780062988492).

Fiction from Multiple Perspectives

Whether their audio versions are recorded by a full cast or one very nimble narrator, these transporting novels have in common multiple voices narrating together. Ranging from a historical road novel to a future-set sf symphony and a timely story of police violence, they offer book groups much to talk about.

The Candy House. By Jennifer Egan. 2022. Scribner (9781476716763). Audio read by a full cast. Simon & Schuster Audio (9781797128412).

Caul Baby. By Morgan Jerkins. 2021. HarperPerennial (9780062873187). Audio read by Joniece Abbott-Pratt. HarperAudio (9780063070431).

How High We Go in the Dark. By Sequoia Nagamatsu. 2022. Morrow (9780063072640). Audio read by a full cast. HarperAudio (9780063072671).

The Lincoln Highway. By Amor Towles. 2021. Viking (9780735222359). Audio read by a full cast. Books on Tape (9780593452097).

We Are Not like Them. By Christine Pride and Jo Piazza. Atria (9781982181048). Audio read by a full cast. Simon & Schuster Audio (9781797131092).

Poetry

Poetry is meant to be heard as well as read, richly constructed as poems are with rhythm, rhymes subtle and overt, word play, surprising juxtapositions and metaphors, and lyricism spare or lush. To both read and listen to the same poems is to fully inhabit them and be fully transported. These powerful collections are read by the poets themselves.

A NOVEL
CAUL BABY
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
MORGAN JERKINS
IN THE HEIGHTS
Finding Home
LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA,
QUIARA ALEGRÍA HUDES,
AND JEREMY McCARTER

All the Flowers Kneeling. By Paul Tran. 2022. Penguin (9780143136842). Audio read by the author. Books on Tape (9780593557815).

Call Us What We Carry. By Amanda Gorman. 2021. Viking (9780593465066). Audio read by the author. Books on Tape (9780593459911).

Dearly: New Poems. By Margaret Atwood. 2020. Ecco (9780063032491). Audio read by the author. HarperAudio (9780063032583).

Homie. By Danez Smith. 2020. Graywolf (9781644450109). Audio read by the author. HighBridge (9781684577392).

Time Is a Mother. By Ocean Vuong. 2022. Penguin (9780593300237). Audio read by the author. Books on Tape (9780593557419).

Recognizable Voices

For some audiobook readers, books are selected based on their narrator alone! A superb narration of a discussable book is even better. These pairings add insight and features like music or interviews to memoirs, demystify difficult formats like plays and experimental fiction, and entertain with familiar, often broadly famous voices.

Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes. By Tony Kushner. 2013. Theatre Communications Group (9781559363846). Audio performed by a full cast. 2019. Books on Tape (9781984883476).

The Dutch House. By Ann Patchett. 2019. Harper (9780062963673). Audio read by Tom Hanks. HarperAudio (9780062963727).

In the Heights: Finding Home. By Lin-Manuel Miranda and others. 2021. illus. Random (9780593229590). Audio read by a full cast. Books on Tape (9780593339688).

Lincoln in the Bardo. By George Saunders. 2017. Random (9780812995343). Audio read by a full cast. Books on Tape (9780553397598).

My Beloved World. By Sonia Sotomayor. 2013. Knopf (9780307594884). Audio read by Rita Moreno. Books on Tape (9780307913128).

The Storyteller: Tales of Life and Music. By Dave Grohl. 2021. Morrow/Dey St. (9780063076099). Audio read by the author. HarperAudio (9780063076129).

Vivid Settings

Some fiction is so atmospheric the setting becomes another character. These novels and short-story collections will wow readers and listeners with powerfully and meaningfully evoked places: a woman cop's gritty Philadelphia beat, the American South and West, nineteenth-century Haiti and Oregon.

All She Left Behind. By Jane Kirkpatrick. 2017. Revell (9780800727000). Audio read by Tavia Gilbert. Recorded Books (9781501968600).

Long Bright River. By Liz Moore. 2020. Riverhead (9780525540687). Audio read by Allyson Ryan. Books on Tape (9780593146880).

In the Valley: Stories and a Novella based on Serena. By Ron Rash. 2020. Anchor (9780525564225). Audio read by Edoardo Ballerini. Books on Tape (9780593212677).

Sabrina & Corina. By Kali Fajardo-Anstine. 2019. Random (9780525511304). Audio read by a full cast. Books on Tape (9781984832207).

Libertie. By Kaitlyn Greenidge. 2021. Algonquin (9781643752587). Audio read by Channie Waites. Recorded Books (9781980075745).

Continued from p.7

consulting industry over the past several decades. The title neatly encapsulates the major problems caused by the widespread use of consultants by corporations and governmental bodies. Examples span the globe, with a focus on the U.S. and UK. The book examines notable events such as the botched rollout of the healthcare.gov website during the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the financial aftermath of Brexit in the UK, and the 2014 Puerto Rico bond downgrade. The authors make clear that the unique and often conflicted nature of the consultant-client relationship is central to these and countless other failures. Four specific proposals for breaking governments' and corporations' dependency on consulting firms are outlined in the book's conclusion. Written in a sophisticated but accessible voice, this would be an excellent addition to any business collection. It also serves as a much-needed counterbalance to books like Ethan M. Raisel's books *The McKinsey Way* (1999) and *The McKinsey Mind* (2001). —*Jennifer Michaelson*

Claim Your Confidence: Unlock Your Superpower and Create the Life You Want.

By Lydia Fenet.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Gallery, $27.99 (9781982196684); e-book (9781982196707). 650.1.

Fenet (*The Most Powerful Woman in the Room Is You*, 2019) shares the secret to confidence in this upfront, inspiring book. According to her, "Every single thing you need is already inside you." Fenet, global thought leader and executive at Christie's, gives readers the necessary tools to release this essential power. She urges women to set up a "Teflon shield" to deflect negative comments, slam their impostor syndrome, get comfortable with the uncomfortable, and accept change as a constant. Fenet freely shares many of her sticky learning situations, as embarrassing as a book signing with five people and as life-threatening as a car accident, demonstrating how action, determination, and astounding grace lead to positive outcomes. Fenet is the perfect cheerleader for women who are overwhelmed, used to taking a back seat, and afraid to dream. Each chapter is filled with nuts-and-bolts suggestions and concludes with testimony by a woman who has succeeded in her field. This book is both inspiring and invigorating, and readers will certainly respond to her challenges. —*Candace Smith*

YA: *Fenet will encourage teens to look within themselves for success. CS.*

Thrive with a Hybrid Workplace: Step-by-Step Guidance from the Experts.

By Felice Ekelman and Julie Kantor.

Mar. 2023. 264p. Rowman & Littlefield, $34 (9781538171677); e-book (9781538171684). 658.4.

Authors Ekelman and Kantor address the need for leaders to consider what a hybrid workplace means for their unique organization. From deep examination of what different types of work demand for employee effectiveness and productivity to identifying criteria for exceptions and possible legal ramifications, leaders are provided with concrete guidance. For example, attention is paid to the need for physical office space and related considerations, such as whether everyone will be in the office for set days, or if days in office may vary and a smaller space is sufficient. Diving more deeply into that smaller-space example, how will employees be assured that a space is available for them whenever they are in the office? This level of guidance through the challenges of defining hybrid work will result in solid outcomes and can serve as a model for decision making in other areas as well. A valuable resource for any organization struggling with the challenges of finding balance between employee and organizational needs, *Thrive with a Hybrid Workplace* will find an audience in both public-library and business-school collections. —*Val Edwards*

Science

Still Life With Bones: Genocide, Forensics, and What Remains.

By Alexa Hagerty.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Crown, $28 (9780593443132). 599.9.

As she excavates mass graves in Guatemala, Alexa Hagerty chants a kind of prayer: "Don't faint. Don't vomit." An anthropologist, Hagerty trains with forensic teams in Guatemala and Argentina, where twentieth-century governments committed genocide against their own citizens. With time, her visceral reaction to handling human bones morphs into care and empathy for the dead. The work is painstaking and grueling; it can take months or years to recover a body, identify it, and reunite the remains with family members. But doing so is crucial to the healing and empowerment of survivors and to seeking justice for state-sponsored atrocities. Community members share stories with the anthropologists of how the military tortured, terrorized, and disappeared family members and friends. Don Jaime, who tells Hagerty about the massacre of his village, says, "The world must not forget what has happened here." Readers of history, science, and true crime will find Hagerty's first book impactful and compelling. Her well-researched and accessible narrative ensures that the history and legacy of violence in Guatemala and Argentina will not be buried. —*Rebecca Hopman*

Technology

Egg: A Dozen Ovatures.

By Lizzie Stark.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Norton, $28 (9780393531503). 637.5.

"The egg is a universe in a shell," Stark whimsically observes in her collection of egg-centered essays. Focusing primarily on chicken eggs, she contemplates the magnificence of ova on multiple levels as progenitor of new life, symbol, and sustenance, tracking cultural associations. She addresses the presence of an egg in many creation myths, eggs as biomedical medium (for influenza vaccine production), poultry-rearing, egg-decorating, collecting eggshells, experimenting on eggs in outer space, and lots of egg-based cuisine. Stark's perky prose and awe make for entertaining reading. Yet she is troubled by how confined "female chickens are consigned to lives of reproductive servitude." Feathery facts flock. Sex between chickens is reported as "pretty kinky." Japan ranks as a top three nation for egg consumption per person. Hens have somewhere between a 10-to-35 percent lifetime risk of ovarian cancer on average, but for humans it's slightly over one percent. Stark writes frankly about her own heightened genetic risk of ovarian cancer and the decision to have her ovaries removed at 39. Beyond the yolk and white, eggs are full of surprises. —*Tony Miksanek*

Health & Medicine

Birthing Liberation: How Reproductive Justice Can Set Us Free.

By Sabia Wade.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Chicago Review, $28.99 (9781641607964). 618.4.

Wade, a Black doula and educator, strongly promotes reproductive justice for all. To make her case, she effectively uses statistics, beginning with the fact that Black people are four-to-five times more likely than whites to die in childbirth. They're also more likely to deliver preterm or low-weight babies. White doctors seem to lack empathy for Black patients. Throughout her chronicle of racial trauma, Wade suggests healing exercises that call for journaling and sitting still. She also weaves in history, reaching back to 1619, when the first ships carrying enslaved Africans arrived in Virginia, and she reveals that a slaveholding surgeon pioneered the cesarean section by repeatedly experimenting on enslaved women's bodies. Endemic racism, of course, extends far beyond women's reproductive health into other health-care realms, education, finance, and the legal system. One in 11 Black adults is currently under correctional control (in prison or on parole or probation). Wade, whose father was shot and killed when she was 13, writes that she feels "Black grief." Her call for liberation illuminates harsh realities and a path forward. —*Karen Springen*

Womb: The Inside Story of Where We All Began.

By Leah Hazard.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Ecco, $28.99 (9780063157620); e-book, $14.99 (9780063157644). 611.

In this homage to the womb, Hazard engagingly and unabashedly shares the fascinating, sometimes gory details of periods, conception, labor, menopause, and hysterectomies. A midwife, writer, podcast host, and mother of two girls, Hazard focuses on the uterus, where eggs are fertilized and babies grow.

Her interviews with top experts lend authority to her easy-to-understand explanations of this underappreciated organ, a muscle that is similar in size and power to a clenched fist and the more celebrated human heart. She goes beyond the basics to share little-known facts, such as how a few women are born with two functioning wombs. She makes excellent use of statistics, too. Is it a cause for concern that women historically had just 100 periods in a lifetime because they were constantly pregnant or breastfeeding but now have 350 to 400? Or that a third of U.S. women undergo a hysterectomy by age 60? Hazard ends with a look to the future. Will financially well-off women choose artificial wombs if they're a possibility? In all, Hazard presents a thought-provoking, information-packed celebration of the uterus. —*Karen Springen*

Gardening

The Container Victory Garden: A Beginner's Guide to Growing Your Own Groceries.

By Maggie Stuckey.

Feb. 2023. 272p. illus. Harper Horizon, paper, $28.99 (9780785255765); e-book (9780785255796). 635.9.

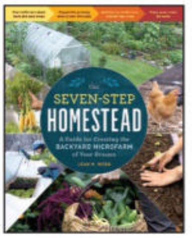
Veteran gardening and cookbook author Stuckey (*Soup Night*, 2013) delivers a title, born of the pandemic, that's both sweetly nostalgic and immensely practical. With an inclusive spirit, she encourages folks with limitations due to space, sun, and more to unsheathe their green thumbs, while also embracing those who have tried unsuccessfully before and welcoming people with mobility issues that keep them out of the traditional garden. Since planning is the key to success, Stuckey walks readers through all the factors and variables that will determine a harvest. Next, the veggies (and more) are each profiled with all the attributes to help gardeners pick the perfect plant. Stuckey also offers rich stories on the history of victory gardens and how they nourished families and souls, making this a great read. This entry-level book is sure to become a favorite resource, and whether they're drawn to the warmth of the narrative or Stuckey's encouraging tone, its readers will be anxious to try their hands at gardening this spring. —*Sarah Tansley*

The Seven-Step Homestead: A Guide for Creating the Backyard Microfarm of Your Dreams.

By Leah M. Webb.

Apr. 2023. 232p. illus. Storey, paper, $24.99 (9781635864113); e-book (9781635864120). 635.

This compassionate, forward-thinking, wholly practical guide works for anyone even entertaining the idea of a backyard garden, whatever their square footage or skill level. The author's opening advice—start small!—is carried through in these seven incremental steps, the first step being to simply plant one or two small beds (four by eight feet), which will allow the gardener time to discern the contours of the yard, available light, soil quality, and labor required to work the space. The second step expands the growing space to a more bountiful 400 square feet. The remaining five steps—fruit trees and shrubs, edible and flowering perennials, four-season growing, larger-scale storage crops (winter squash, potatoes, etc.), and chickens—are interchangeable, depending on the gardener's inclinations and space limitations. Webb everywhere enriches this practical approach with wonderfully granular specifics, aided by spot-on illustrations: how to sheet mulch (huge when developing soil), design a layout, select annuals and perennials, create proper spacing for trees and shrubs, build a trellis, prune, build cold frames and greenhouses, and plan and build a coop, among many other instructions. A superb guide for virtually all seasons, landscapes, and gardeners. —*Alan Moores*



Cookery

Cucina Povera: The Italian Way of Transforming Humble Ingredients into Unforgettable Meals.

By Giulia Scarpaleggia.

Mar. 2023. 320p. illus. Artisan, $35 (9781648290565); e-book (9781648292101). 641.5945.

Tuscan-born cooking instructor and food blogger Scarpaleggia presents *cucina povera*, traditional peasant cooking, with the reverence it deserves and treats it as an art to be studied. No food shall be wasted, be it beans or tubers, bread, dairy and eggs, the quinto quarto (least desirable cuts of meat), or the tiniest of fish. She provides an enjoyable tour of Italy, highlighting how similar ingredients get a slightly different treatment depending on where they originate. Vegetables and dairy become mouthwatering spinach and cheese strangolapreti in Alto Adige, while in Tuscany, chard or kale is blended with ricotta to form gnudi, a satisfying dumpling. Dishes like oxtail stew with rigatoni show how la cucina povera has a newly elevated level of mass appeal, as it's now a popular and sought-after restaurant dish. This book is an invaluable cultural guide and history lesson in the foundations of Italian cooking that enthusiasts will not want to miss. —*Jessica S. Levy*

Did You Eat Yet? Craveable Recipes from an All-American Asian Chef.

By Ronnie Woo.

Mar. 2023. 288p. illus. Harvest, $32.50 (9780358581697); e-book (9780358581864). 641.595.

Although Ronnie Woo is unquestionably proud of his Asian heritage, his cooking inspiration includes just about every other continent too. A former personal trainer, Woo claims to exercise solely so that he can eat whatever he wants. He confects a giant cinnamon roll with cream cheese frosting. In lieu of bacon to go with his eggs, he turns a chunk of pork butt into a version of Chinese barbecued pork, char siu. Woo's remarkable recipes have some healthy options, particularly some entree-worthy salads. His fried rice calls for separating eggs, coating the rice with yolks, and frying the whites as a garnish along with Chinese sausage. Corn and sweet potato combine for a creamy New England chowder. Very Italian bucatini with tomato and ricotta gets a savory punch from the addition of fish sauce. Serious fusion appears in steamed buns with a sort of cheeseburger filling. For dessert, no-churn blackberry ice cream beckons. Woo's enthusiasm bubbles in every recipe's description, and photos add to the book's festive approach to cooking. —*Mark Knoblauch*

Made in Chicago: Stories behind 30 Great Hometown Bites.

By Monica Eng and David Hammond.

Mar. 2023. 168p. illus. Univ. of Illinois/3 Fields, paper, $19.95 (9780252087059); e-book (9780252054068). 641.

Chicago has invented, transformed, and promoted dozens of foods that give the city its distinct and inimitable gastronomy. Veteran Chicago journalists Eng and Hammond teamed up to delve into 30 of those unique Chicago eats to discover their origins and their status as icons of American cuisine. Befitting a city of multiethnic workers perpetually on the run, many of Chicago's special eats are meant to be consumed on the go. Fans of "Chicago Mix," that mash-up of caramel and cheese popcorn, form lines outside local shops that shake sticky kernels out by the bagful. Thanks to much television exposure, the dripping, clothes-staining Italian beef sandwich has earned a nationwide following. When it comes to the disputatious history of deep-dish pizza, the authors wisely lay out the various alternative claims to its creation without taking sides. A few main dishes, such as chicken Vesuvio and shrimp DeJonghe, offer more substantial sit-down fare. Where possible and appropriate, recipes appear, so that those far from Lake Michigan can reproduce a bit of the Windy City in their own kitchens. —*Mark Knoblauch*

Undercooked: How I Let Food Become My Life Navigator and How Maybe That's a Dumb Way to Live.

By Dan Ahdoot.

Mar. 2023. 240p. illus. Crown, $28 (9780593240793); e-book (9780593240809). 647.95092.

Actor and comedian Ahdoot's coming-of-age memoir takes readers on an often-hilarious ride through his many food-related adventures. From a young age, he seemed destined for haute cuisine, cultivating a high-end taste for homemade soufflés, Michelin-starred meals, and the latest restaurant trends. Eventually though, it seemed that his passion for food was perhaps coming at the expense of his personal relationships. Whether telling outsized stories of sending back the risotto at Osteria Francescana in Modena, or spending a week in Parisian foodie heaven with a new lover (also a cover for his sorrow over a recent breakup), or sharing gory details of hunting with the guys, or simply reminiscing about his grandmother's home-cooked Persian meals, Ahdoot is a skilled storyteller who will leave readers wanting more. Readers don't need to know much about the author to commiserate or laugh along. His personality pops off the page through clever writing, and while his antics are occasionally off-putting (like accidentally starting a forest fire), his all-too-human need for self-forgiveness and acceptance comes across as universal. *—Jessica S. Levy*

The Arts

The American Blockbuster: Movies That Defined Their Generations.

By Benjamin Crace.

2022. 317p. illus. ABC-CLIO, $97 (9781440877803). 791.43.

The inclusion criteria here are pretty straightforward: box-office sales. These are the blockbusters, the films that made the most money each year. Entries are grouped according to familiar generational indicators: boomers, X-ers, millennials, and Gen Z. The films are listed in alphabetical order within their designated time periods, and after a few basic facts (director, main characters, cash return), four- or five-page signed essays provide overviews of each film's impact, detailed plot synopsis, analysis of how members of different generations responded to the movie, see-also references to other entries with similar topics or parallel audience receptions, and film-specific further-reading suggestions (an additional extensive bibliography is included in the back matter). Without exception, the essays are accessible, insightful, and entertaining. Four introductory articles take a bit more academic tone as they explore major cinematic themes like films and generational consciousness, and movies and American morals. The satisfying treatments and thoughtful commentary will appeal to upper-secondary and academic film students, and all movie buffs should enjoy the unique generational approach. *—Kathleen McBroom*

Can't Stop the Grrrls: Confronting Sexist Labels in Music from Ariana Grande to Yoko Ono.

By Lily E. Hirsch.

Mar. 2023. 234p. illus. Rowman & Littlefield, $32 (9781538169063); e-book (9781538169070). 780.82.

Women in music are routinely dismissed, harassed, and insulted using gendered tropes and stereotypes. Yoko Ono broke up the band, Courtney Love drove Kurt Cobain to suicide, Britney Spears is crazy, Mariah Carey is too demanding—the list goes on and on. Music historian Hirsch (*Weird Al: Seriously*, 2020) examines the sexist language that fans, critics, and artists use not just to devalue the work of female musicians but to delegitimize their very existence in music spaces. Encompassing decades of music journalism, Hirsch's analysis is pointed and damning. The misogyny directed at female musicians is routine and reflexive, becoming even more vicious when the artist in question is a woman of color. At times, the book's tight focus on gender works to its detriment, missing out important questions of how sexuality, fatness, and disability inflect the specific criticisms leveled against women in music. Despite such oversights, *Can't Stop the Grrrls* is an important intervention in music criticism, a methodical yet impassioned chronicle of how language is weaponized against women artists—and how we can do better. *—Jenny Hamilton*

Oscar Wars: A History of Hollywood in Gold, Sweat, and Tears.

By Michael Schulman.

Feb. 2023. 608p. Harper, $35 (9780062859013). 791.43.

The Academy Awards were created nearly a century ago for business reasons, to give legitimacy to an upstart organization that had more enemies than friends; the glamour, the spectacle, the controversies—all that came later. Entertainment journalist Schulman takes readers through the twisted, complicated history of the Oscars—and, by extension, the history of Hollywood—in this endlessly fascinating new book. Each chapter focuses on a small story and examines its broader significance, from the role in Oscar history of a specific individual (Louis B. Mayer) to the backstory behind a controversial event (the envelope mix-up in 2017). This approach works better than a broad-strokes history; the highly detailed stories function like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, each revealing part of the bigger picture. The author, a staff writer at the *New Yorker* (he also wrote *Her Again*, a biography of Meryl Streep), clearly knows his subject, and his enthusiasm is thoroughly contagious. Oodles of fun, a perfect book for the run-up to the 2023 Oscars. *—David Pitt*

See What You're Missing: New Ways of Looking at the World through Art.

By Will Gompertz.

Mar. 2023. 336p. illus. Pegasus, $28.95 (9781639361731); e-book (9781639361748). 701.

Do artists hold the power to wake us up from the semiconscious, zombielike routines of modern life? Celebrated art expert Gompertz's essays about famous works of art and artists instruct the reader in what to look at, how to look, and, ultimately, how to live in more rewarding ways. This thorough and diverse collection explores some of history's most notable creations by the likes of such masters as Rembrandt, Cezanne, and Artemisia Gentileschi as well as such contemporary artists as James Turrell, Jennifer Packer, David Hockney, and Yayoi Kusama. Pertinent biographical information and humorous anecdotes introduce the reader to many ways of shifting one's perspective, altered points of view that hold the possibility of improving one's experiences. In addition to heightening awareness, Gompertz's illuminations of artists' lives and minds are accessible and full of valuable information. This is an exhilarating resource for personal growth, a consciousness-raising exploration for artists and art lovers, and an asset for anyone interested in the who, what, and why of great artworks. *—Anne Doventry*

Spiritual Moderns: Twentieth-Century American Artists & Religion.

By Erika Doss.

Mar. 2023. 352p. illus. Univ. of Chicago, $35 (9780226820910). 700.

Art historian Doss defines "spiritual moderns" as "artists whose methods and understandings of modernism were informed by their religious beliefs and experiences, who simultaneously explored and also questioned those beliefs." The artists she considers are Joseph Cornell (1903–72), a member of the Church of Christ, Scientist; Mark Tobey (1890–1976), a follower of the Bahá'í faith; Agnes Pelton (1881–1961), a devotee of New Thought, Theosophy and Agni Yoga; and Andy Warhol (1929–87), a lifelong Eastern Rite Catholic. All four, Doss writes, "appropriated religious ideas, images, and practices to create distinctive styles of modern American art." These styles are surrealism (Cornell), abstract expressionism (Tobey), symbolism (Pelton), and pop art (Warhol). An introductory essay sets the stage for the following chapters that consider each artist and their work with a careful and expert eye. Doss's clear and cogent prose, accented by crisp illustrations of key works and supported by extensive research, make this distinctly focused and illuminating study an essential choice for art history collections. *—Carolyn Mulac*

The Woman Who Dared: The Life and Times of Pearl White, Queen of the Serials.

By William M. Drew.

Mar. 2023. 640p. illus. Univ. Press of Kentucky, $50 (9780813196831); e-book (9780813196848). 791.43.

Before Angelina Jolie could achieve fame as Lara Croft, Tomb Raider, and Scarlett Johansson could light up the screen as the Avengers' Black Widow, the silent film superstar Pearl White had to pave the way for public acceptance of a female action hero. White, best known as the heroine of the silent film era's popular serial franchise, The Perils of Pauline, was that rarest of women leads, athletic enough to perform her own death-defying stunts yet delicate enough to evoke the tenderest of emotions. As she captured the imaginations of moviegoers around the world, White's on-screen exploits were nearly eclipsed by her off-screen life. Tales of romances and marriages, international adventures and political activism were frothy fodder for the paparazzi and tabloid journalists of the day. In presenting the first full-length biography of this pioneering film star, Drew accomplishes the formidable task of chronicling White's personal and professional saga in microscopic detail, offering unrivaled access to the inner workings of the early-twentieth-century movie industry. An essential resource for readers interested in silent films in particular and cinematic history. *—Carol Haggas*

Sports & Recreation

The Black Athlete Revolt: The Sport Justice Movement in the Age of #BlackLivesMatter.

By Shaun M. Anderson.

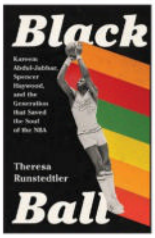
Feb. 2023. 192p. illus. Rowman & Littlefield, $34 (9781538153246); e-book (9781538153253). 796.089.

Anderson, a professor at Loyola Marymount University who specializes in sports and social responsibility, explores how prejudice and discrimination have affected Black athletes and how, in turn, those athletes have played critical roles in revealing and confronting prejudice, helping in the process to "bend the arc toward justice." Not to be confused with Harry Edwards' *Revolt of the Black Athlete* (but a good companion title), this short book makes a timely contribution to collections on sports and social-justice reform movements. The opening chapter provides a historical overview going back to the early nineteenth century, when Black jockeys dominated horse racing, through the 1960s civil rights movement, and noting why there was a pause in athlete activism during the 1980s and '90s. Anderson excels at showing how historical events led to Colin Kaepernick's "Kneel Heard 'Round the World," and he offers a perceptive analysis of the sparks that ignited the Black Lives Matter movement and how it has prompted the "revitalization of athlete activism." This book opens with a foreword by NBA veteran and attorney Len Elmore and concludes with an action plan for creating positive social change. *—Brenda Barrera*

Black Ball: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Spencer Haywood, and the Generation That Saved the Soul of the NBA.

By Theresa Runstedtler.

Mar. 2023. 368p. illus. Bold Type, $29 (9781645036951); e-book (9781645036968). 796.323.

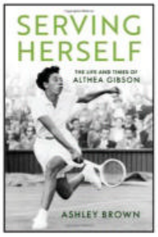

Black
Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Spencer Haywood, and the Generation that Saved the Soul of the NBA
Theresa Runstedtler
Ball

Runstedtler, who teaches African American history at American University and who in 2012 authored a thoughtful take on legendary boxer Jack Johnson, here pays respect to several key NBA players—Connie Hawkins, Spencer Haywood, Oscar Robertson, and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar among them—who, in the supposedly apolitical 1970s, laid the essential economic and political groundwork upon which the modern, hugely successful NBA was built. For example, Haywood, flouting NBA rules requiring players to wait four years after high-school graduation before joining a team, would leave the University of Detroit after his sophomore year to play with the upstart ABA Denver Rockets for the 1969–70 season. The NBA Seattle SuperSonics signed him for the next season, leading to an antitrust suit the team would win against the league, thus not only knocking down the NBA's four-year requirement but also leading to the dismantling of other serious antitrust practices. This low-key but important title fills some glaring gaps in the history of American sports, economics, race relations, and politics. *—Alan Moores*

Serving Herself: The Life and Times of Althea Gibson.

By Ashley Brown.

Feb. 2023. 616p. illus. Oxford, $29.95 (9780197551752). 796.342092.



In 2019, a statue of Althea Gibson was unveiled at the U.S. Open, honoring the trailblazing athlete who dominated tennis in the 1950s. Often compared to Jackie Robinson, Gibson won 11 major titles and was the first African American to win both the U.S. Open and Wimbledon. The statue was a long-overdue tribute for a woman who was a household name before Arthur Ashe or Venus and Serena Williams. Gibson also broke barriers beyond tennis by becoming the first African American golfer to play on the LPGA tour. Brown, a historian specializing in African American studies and sports, began this book as her PhD dissertation, and it shows its academic origins in terms of scholarship while remaining accessible for general readers. This is a monumental, comprehensive biography that blends Gibson's remarkable athletic accomplishments with the inspirational story of how she lived through the Jim Crow era and navigated segregation, racism, and gender discrimination, all the while fighting for the integration of sports. After triumphing at Wimbledon, Gibson pledged to "wear the title with dignity and humility"; this fine tribute makes clear that she did just that. Highly recommend for sports and history collections. *—Brenda Barrera*

YA: *Inspirational reading for teen sports fans and students of African American history. BB.*

Welcome to the Circus of Baseball: A Story of the Perfect Summer, at the Perfect Ballpark, at the Perfect Time.

By Ryan McGee.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Doubleday, $29 (9780385548403); e-book (9780385548427). 796.

ESPN senior writer and radio cohost McGee sets his wayback machine to 1994, when he served as a first-year intern for the Asheville (North Carolina) Tourists, who played at hallowed McCormick Field, where Ruth, Cobb, Robinson, and Clemente made appearances as players, and Cal Ripken Jr. served as a bat boy. McGee would bolt the team for a gig with ESPN before the season even ended—hardly making for a "perfect" anything—but readers will be charmed by the gallery of owners, players, coaches, groundskeepers, concessionaires, (fighting!) mascots, fellow interns, and fans McGee paints with such vivid colors in this account of one small, all-hands-on-deck, minor-league club back in the beforetime. For fans of the movie *Bull Durham. —Alan Moores*

Women and Water: Stories of Adventure, Self-Discovery, and Connection in and on the Water.

By Gale Straub and others.

Mar. 2023. 240p. illus. Chronicle, $24.95 (9781797216249); e-book (9781797216256). 797.

From the all-women team who launched *She Explores*—a popular podcast and inclusive online community that connects people to nature and the outdoors—this visually stunning book featuring exquisite color photographs is sure to inspire a wide range of nature enthusiasts. The focus of the short entries is water—not just traditional water sports but all forms of interacting in nature with water, including fishing and various ice endeavors. The 41 contributors range from noted author Bonnie Tsui (*Why We Swim,* 2020), to a Canadian yoga instructor who surfed while pregnant and found "Black Joy in the Outdoors," to a widow who had recently lost her wife and writes about how fly-fishing "gave my grief room to breathe." Among the most surprising entries are ice climber Nikki Smith's reflections on scaling frozen waterfalls and Laura Kottlowski's account of ice-skating on pristine mountain lakes around the world. Includes sidebar entries on enjoying the water with pets, underwater photography, and water as a playground for children. A clarion call for women to immerse themselves in water, whatever the form or season. *—Brenda Barrera*

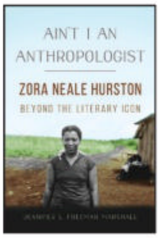
GRIFTERS FRAUDS AND CROOKS
9781578597963
AMERICAN CULTS
9781578598007
THE HANDY SUPREME COURT ANSWER BOOK
9781578597826
THE WITCHES' ALMANAC
9781578597604
The Astrology Guide
9781578597383
The Afterlife Book
9781578597611
Visible Ink Press is distributed by Publishers Group West

Literature

Ain't I an Anthropologist: Zora Neale Hurston beyond the Literary Icon.

By Jennifer L. Freeman Marshall.

Mar. 2023. 264p. illus. Univ. of Illinois, $110 (9780252044960); paper, $27.95 (9780252087103); e-book (9780252054150). 813.

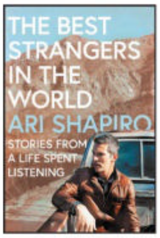


Doomed to obscurity, Zora Neale Hurston was then resurrected as a "founding mother" of Black literature and folklore. Yet her pioneering work in African diaspora ethnography and anthropology, especially her work in Haiti, remains little-known. Marshall bluntly explains why, citing "the obvious institutional racism of the era and the lack of university positions available for Black intellectuals" along with Hurston's "overt feminist stance, racism which encouraged artistic rather than academic endeavors, and the constraints imposed upon research funding agencies and donors." Hurston was not viewed as academic or objective, especially in comparison to the two best-known white anthropologists of the day, Melville Herskovits and Margaret Mead. Hurston was criticized for a "lack of authority," while serious flaws in Mead's work in Samoa were overlooked. Herskovits, who also studied Haiti, emphasized professional distance, whereas Hurston spoke Creole, connected easily with locals, and was an initiate in Haitian religious practice. Hurston called out the damage caused by American colonization while being stymied by publishers "interested only in works that reify stereotypical attitudes concerning the Negro." Marshall concludes that Hurston's refusal to be defined as "tragically colored" formed her genius as she "embraces . . . the right to feel and be herself, idiosyncratic and sometimes puzzling, like any member of the human race." —*Lesley Williams*

The Best Strangers in the World: Stories from a Life Spent Listening.

By Ari Shapiro.

Mar. 2023. 256p. HarperOne, $28.99 (9780063221345). 813.



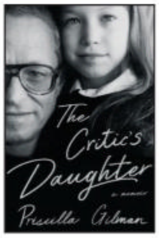
Some readers may be familiar with Ari Shapiro from his hosting duties on NPR's *All Things Considered.* Others may know him best for his vocal contributions to the genre-defying Pink Martini Orchestra or his many podcasts or his time as a White House correspondent. His legions of fans will be delighted to know that this memoir embodies the qualities he's known for: self-deprecating humor, honesty, scrupulous attention to detail, and his ability to convey the impact of momentous world events through the stories of everyday people. Something of an outsider himself (the only Jewish kid in his Fargo, North Dakota, elementary school; the only openly gay senior in his Portland, Oregon, high school; probably the only public radio announcer who costars in a cabaret show with Alan Cumming), Shapiro shapes his stories around the fascinating individuals he's met, whether through his international investigative reporting or through audience interactions. The book keeps on giving, chapter after chapter, in turns humorous, introspective, or deeply serious, weaving together personal anecdotes, behind-the-scenes secrets, and heartbreaking profiles from war zones and refugee camps. Shapiro says he's built his radio career on "empathy, connection, and listening"— qualities that ring true in his writing as well. —*Kathleen McBroom*

YA: *Teens will appreciate Shapiro's humor and name dropping and find inspiration in his openness to new people and adventures. KM.*

The Critic's Daughter.

By Priscilla Gilman.

Feb. 2023. 288p. Norton, $28.95 (9780393651324). 810.



Drawing on her lifelong immersion in literature as the daughter of influential drama critic Richard Gilman and prominent literary agent Lynn Nesbit, Gilman writes with resplendent clarity, meticulous candor, and incandescent love forged in the fire of extraordinarily demanding family dynamics. After addressing her first son's developmental disorder in *The Anti-Romantic Child* (2011), she now looks back to her 1970s New York childhood when her brilliant, ebullient, and charismatic father was the go-to parent. Though profoundly committed to his calling—"he believed in the worth, the indispensability, the nobility, even, of the critical endeavor"—Richard positively reveled in fatherhood, while Nesbit focused on her career. Gilman describes an imagination-stoking household enlivened by such bookish family friends as Anatole Broyard, Anne Roiphe, Joan Didion, and Toni Morrison. But she sensed a widening gulf between her very different parents and sure enough they split up when she was ten. Her mother was liberated; her father devastated, and Gilman, abruptly made aware of her father's unnervingly dark side, committed herself to hiding her sorrow and playing the role of the "effervescent girl" to try to make things easier for her parents. Gilman incisively charts her remarkable father's intense ups-and-downs and lucidly analyzes her own struggles in a richly involving chronicle gracefully laced with literary allusions, compassion, and wisdom. —*Donna Seaman*

Everything I Never Wanted to Know.

By Christine Hume.

Mar. 2023. 184p. Mad Creek, paper, $19.95 (9780814258620); e-book (9780814282687). 814.

Poet and essayist Hume (*Saturation Project*, 2021) pens a collection of unapologetic essays about women's bodies, sexual abuse, and its offenders. The first section, "Consider," considers the way sex offenders are treated, specifically the use of the National Sex Offender Registry. While not defending abuse, she advocates for humane treatment of offenders and questions what the registry accomplishes—other than lifetime criminalization and the perpetuation of the myth of stranger danger despite the fact that most abusers are known to their victims. The second section, "Yes, But," broadly examines women's bodies within the ideas of agency, restriction, violence, and criminalization. Using personal experience, history (the 1940s Nylon Riots), and current events (Larry Nasser), Hume weaves meandering, compelling, erudite essays firmly based in feminism. One of the longest pieces, "All the Women I Know," includes photos and catalogs the myriad ways women create meaningful lives amidst pain, tragedy, and a society that devalues them. For any and all readers ready to work their brains around serious issues. —*Kathy Sexton*

Forager: Field Notes For Surviving A Family Cult.

By Michelle Dowd.

Mar. 2023. 288p. illus. Algonquin, $28 (9781643751856). 810.

In this poignant memoir, journalist Dowd recounts her calamitous youth growing up in an apocalyptic cult. As the progeny of the cult's prophet, Dowd was expected to strictly adhere to all rules without question and learn how to survive in the wilderness. Affection, whether familial, platonic, or romantic, was forbidden. Outsiders were not to be trusted, even blood relatives. Dowd was subjected to starvation, neglect, and abuse as tests of strength and punishment for alleged misdeeds. In her early teens, Dowd was struck with a serious illness that left her hospitalized for long stretches of time. Throughout her recovery, she realized that escape was her only means of survival. Drawing on skills she learned from the cult, Dowd is ultimately able to break free. While the subject matter is heavy, Dowd's self-assured prose ensures that the reader is never crushed. Beautifully delicate illustrations and foraging tips also keep things bright. An inspiring and insightful tale of resilience in the face of adversity, this book is hard to put down. —*Michelle Ross*

Happily: A Personal History—with Fairy Tales.

By Sabrina Orah Mark.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Random, $27 (9780593242476). 814.

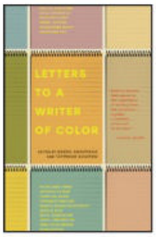
In personal essays grounded in her life as a writer, Jewish woman, mother to two sons, and a daughter herself, Mark (*Wild Milk*, 2018) reveals the interconnected truths of the stories we know as well as those we don't. "We turn to fairy tales not to escape but to go deeper into a terrain we've inherited, the vast and muddy terrain of the human psyche." Drifting, kite-like, from the mundane to the scholarly, her expansive view looks to Andersen, Grimm, and Disney and to the work of

Walter Benjamin, Angela Carter, and Bruno Schulz, the Polish Jewish painter whose fairy-tale murals on a young boy's bedroom wall did not protect him, as they were promised to, from Nazi hatred. Mark, whose *Paris Review* column, "Happily," gathers many of these essays, writes with profound curiosity, attentive awe, and a poet's magnifying vision. A broken-beyond-repair iPad becomes a whole country, dropping glass shards. Since it's time, "one thousand o'clock," the author and everyone she knows gather a piper's payment. Seamlessly, Mark's imagination makes new the ancient and oft-told. —*Annie Bostrom*

Letters to a Writer of Color.
Ed. by Deepa Anappara and Taymour Soomro.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Random, paper, $17 (9780593449417). 814.

In this essay collection, novelists Anappara (*Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line*, 2020) and Soomro (*Other Names for Love*, 2022) bring together authors of color from all walks of life, extending empathy and wisdom for aspiring fellow writers. The contributors are unapologetic in their suggestions to unlearn westernized rules for storytelling and to reimagine and dissect their craft without the white gaze. They encourage readers to decentralize the understanding of (and pandering to the feelings of) a white, cisgender audience. Themes of authenticity, trauma, structure, and voice are communal but are addressed with an endearing level of intimacy. The authors also expose the gaslighting they've experienced in traditional publishing pathways, offering truth full of both caution and defiant inspiration. The resulting book is a beautiful collage of advice with a recurring directive: writers must bring their full selves to storytelling. Elements such as social status, environment, community, and cultural traditions all play a part in making well-rounded characters. At the end of each essay, a list of suggested readings offers avenues for further research. This captivating love letter to writers of color deserves to be in every library the world over. —*LaParis Hawkins*



YA: *Young readers and writers will enjoy gaining a different perspective on storytelling and learning what many well-known writers endured to be published. LH.*

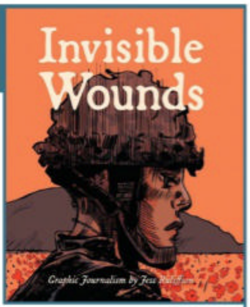
More: Life on the Edge of Adventure and Motherhood.
By Majka Burhardt.

Mar. 2023. 304p. illus. Pegasus, $27.95 (9781639363490); e-book (9781639363506). 810.

As a veteran mountain climber and guide, Burhardt has explored remote locations, conquered treacherous peaks, and overcome multiple injuries. Then she is faced with what may be her biggest challenge yet: becoming the mother of twins. In a series of journal

Spotlight on **Book Discussions**

Top 10 Book-Group Books



These ten titles, reviewed in *Booklist* from July 1, 2022, through February 1, 2023, will open up discussions of grief, injustice, and family relationships, making them all exceedingly book-group worthy. —*Susan Maguire*

Nonfiction

And Finally: Matters of Life and Death. By Henry Marsh. 2023. St. Martin's, $27.99 (9781250286086).

This is a tender account of a doctor-turned-patient whose chronic disease and awareness of the inevitability of death are compellingly navigated, ultimately arriving at gratitude for every moment gifted.

Fatty Fatty Boom Boom: A Memoir of Food, Fat, and Family. By Rabia Chaudry. 2022. Algonquin, $28.95 (9781643750385).

From discovering fast food as a U.S. immigrant to craving her mother's cooking and return trips to Pakistan, Chaudry shares a candid and bighearted story about her lifelong love/hate relationships with food and her body.

The Fishermen and the Dragon: Fear, Greed, and a Fight for Justice on the Gulf Coast. By Kirk Wallace Johnson. 2022. Viking, $28 (9781984880123).

Johnson tackles xenophobia, environmental disaster, the psychological effects of war, and more as he explores the case of a young Vietnamese fisherman who kills a white man in a small Texas town on Galveston Bay in the 1970s.

Invisible Wounds. By Jess Ruliffson. Illus. by the author. 2022. Fantagraphics, $24.99 (9781683961901).

This graphic-novel account of 12 U.S. military veterans who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq, after serving in a variety of capacities, tells 12 wholly unique stories that touch upon age, race, gender, sexuality, and location.

The World Record Book of Racist Stories. By Amber Ruffin and Lacey Lamar. 2022. Grand Central, $29 (9781538724552).

Having faced racism that will make readers' skin crawl, sisters Ruffin and Lamar offer humor in a riotous tangle of rage, disbelief, amusement, and frustration, while also affirming their underlying message: racism is harmful and pervasive.

Fiction

The Book of Everlasting Things. By Aanchal Malhotra. 2022. Flatiron, $29.99 (9781250802026).

In this majestic and evocative debut, which begins in 1938, the lives of Hindu Samir and Muslim Firdaus intertwine even as, in the coming years, Partition rips their world apart.

Demon Copperhead. By Barbara Kingsolver. 2022. Harper, $32.50 (9780063251922).

In this ingenious survivor's tale, a virtuoso present-day variation on Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield,* young Damon Field reflects on nature, Appalachia, family, responsibility, love, and endemic social injustice.

The Light Pirate. By Lily Brooks-Dalton. 2022. Grand Central, $28 (9781538708279).

Rudder, named for the eroding town her pregnant mother evacuated, finds that she has the ability to create light along the surface of water in this luminous tale of a frighteningly possible future.

Someday, Maybe. By Onyi Nwabineli. 2022. Graydon, $26.99 (9781525899805).

In this deeply emotional novel, Eve Ezenwa-Morrow is floundering after her husband dies by suicide, despite her strong support network in her close-knit Nigerian British family, until she finds hope in an unexpected place.

Time's Undoing. By Cheryl A. Head. 2023. Dutton, $27 (9780593471821).

In 1929, a Black master carpenter is killed in Birmingham, Alabama. In 2019, his great-granddaughter hunts down the hidden truth about his life and unsolved murder in this novel that traces both timelines simultaneously.

entries spanning from her early pregnancy in 2015 through the first four-and-a-half years of motherhood, Burhardt describes with heartrending candor dilemmas many of us will face: How do you maintain a core identity while embracing all-encompassing life changes? Does becoming a parent lead to a series of unacceptable but necessary compromises and concessions? Burhardt's unique journey highlights her own struggle to construct a satisfying life: as a woman, wife, mother, athlete, professional advocate, conservationist, and contributing citizen of the world. Readers unfamiliar with the dangers and rewards of ice climbing may not completely relate to her vocation, but many will recognize the enormous pressure to strive and achieve in all areas of life. Both adrenaline seekers and armchair enthusiasts will admire Burhardt's raw honesty and marvel at her incredible achievements. *—Joelle Egan*

More to Say: Essays & Appreciations.

By Ann Beattie.

Feb. 2023. 304p. Godine, paper, $17.95 (9781567927528); e-book (9781567927535). 814.

While Beattie (*A Wonderful Stroke of Luck*, 2019) was writing her many novels and short stories, she also lived an under-the-radar life: "I had fun sneaking around, moonlighting as a nonfiction writer." In her first essay collection, Beattie brings together pieces about writers and artists she admires and learns from. The pleasure Beattie took in preparing for and composing these keen "appreciations" radiates from every line. She is funny, inquisitive, ardently descriptive, brilliantly interpretative, drawn to paradox, and amusingly self-deprecating. Of Alice Munro's sterling stories Beattie writes, "What goes unsaid has the potential to bring the house down." In parsing a story by Elizabeth Spencer, Beattie notes, "She's more interested in the humidity than the temperature." Beattie also analyzes works by Andre Dubus, John Updike, and the recently rediscovered Nancy Hale among many others. On the visual-art beat, Beattie writes about her painter husband, Lincoln Perry, Grant Wood, and photographers Bob Adelman, Sally Mann, Joel Meyerowitz, and Jayne Hinds Bidaut, to name a select few. Attuned to the uniqueness of each writer and artist's vision, Beattie is an exhilarating and illuminating appreciator. *—Donna Seaman*

★ The Ugly History of Beautiful Things: Essays on Desire and Consumption.

By Katy Kelleher.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Simon & Schuster, $27.99 (9781982179359). 814.

To be captivated by beauty is a soul-enriching feeling, one that can defy rationalization. One loves what one loves, after all. But sometimes it's wise not to look too closely at the object of desire, to refrain from going beneath the veneer of beauty, for often there is a painful and ugly history behind its creation. Kelleher, once a moody, emotive teen, has always found herself drawn to the glittering light of diamonds, the sensuous feel of pure silk, the narcissistic allure of the mirror. A journalist who frequently chronicles opulent home décor trends on location, Kelleher is immersed in beauty in her professional and personal lives, although the latter is often on a less-expensive scale. What attracts her to a translucent porcelain plate or iridescent scallop shell, however, is often offset by the realization that these objects are rarely "untouched by the depravity of human greed or unblemished by the chemical undoings of time." Through personal revelation and scholarly research, Kelleher's engrossing essays cogently explore the unsettling dichotomy between the precious and the problematic, the seedy and the sublime to vividly reveal the pleasures and perils in pursuit of ideal beauty. *—Carol Haggas*

THE UGLY HISTORY OF BEAUTIFUL THINGS
ESSAYS ON DESIRE AND CONSUMPTION
KATY KELLEHER

What Looks like Bravery.

By Laurel Braitman.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Simon & Schuster, $27.99 (9781501158506). 810.

Science historian and TED Fellow Braitman (*Animal Madness*, 2014) directs the Writing and Storytelling Program at Stanford University's School of Medicine. In this memoir, she addresses the central tragedy of her life. Beginning when she was three years old and until his death just prior to her high-school graduation, Braitman's father struggled against a voracious form of cancer. An accomplished surgeon, he used his knowledge and connections to stay one step ahead of the disease as long as possible, but the cost was high. He suffered through multiple surgeries, including amputations, as the cancer returned year after year. The author recounts these events in lacerating detail and then moves decades forward to her stark realization at 36 that she never actually recovered from this loss. Braitman then recounts her work with grieving children, who teach her to reconsider the lessons she learned from her father's life and death, leading to a new perspective, love, and the ability to mourn her dying mother. Readers struggling with grief will identify strongly with Braitman's story. *—Colleen Mondor*

Writing while Parenting.

By Ben Berman.

Mar. 2023. 222p. Able Muse, paper, $22.95 (9781773491110); e-book (9781773491127). 814.

Poet Berman (*Figuring in the Figure*, 2017) incorporates his personal life into his writing, as the two have become hard to separate. Berman and his wife are the parents of two precocious young girls. Often, the author relays, he wakes at ungodly hours (3:00 a.m.) to write, exhaustion stoking his creative flow as he puts pen to paper. In one anecdote, the frustrating fixing of his daughter's zipper leads to the repair of an imperfect poem. Berman views his poetry as similar to his children, creations necessitating the utmost care, even if he doesn't get things right the first time. This is a charming read, joining the joys and frustrations of being a parent with the similar characteristics of one's profession. As Berman imparts parental and writing advice in each chapter, his love of both shines through with every word. Many readers who are attempting to balance parenthood with creative pursuits will be able to relate to and sympathize with many of the situations the author recounts. *—Philip Zozzaro*

Poetry

★ Unshuttered.

By Patricia Smith.

Feb. 2023. 120p. illus. TriQuarterly, $28 (9780810145634); e-book (9780810145641). 811.

Smith (*Incendiary Art*, 2017), winner of the 2021 Poetry Foundation Ruth Lilly Award for Lifetime Achievement, has been searching for and collecting photographs of nineteenth-century African Americans for more than two decades. As she studied hard-to-find images of long-gone men, women, and children in stiff clothing motionless before the camera, she "became obsessed with conjuring voices that reflect who the subjects in the pictures may have been and how they are inextricably connected to us." Forty-two formal portraits grace these pages, in which nearly no one smiles. The subjects are unnamed, but the studio and location, ranging from Philadelphia to Virginia, Chicago, Memphis, and Nebraska, are often displayed. Each image is accompanied by a poem which vary from spare, evocative lyrics to solidly constructed, history-stepped declarations of violence survived and violence to come. Each voice is unique and trenchant as the personas Smith creates so imaginatively, empathically, and adroitly express longing, love, grief, anger, defiance, and fortitude. A young man mourns his mother; a father mourns his daughter. We meet a wet nurse, a railroad worker, couples, families, and an elegant young Boston woman who states that her "step / is fierce." With tender precision, Smith's exquisite photo album elucidates our past and steers us toward a more conscious and ethical future. *—Donna Seaman*

PATRICIA SMITH
Unshuttered

Geography & Travel

American Ramble: A Walk of Memory and Renewal.

By Neil King Jr.

Mar. 2023. 368p. illus. Mariner, $28.99 (9780358701491); e-book (9780063298361). 917.

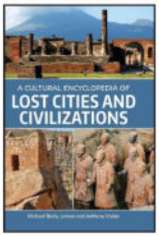
In the spring of 2022, author King, a cancer survivor, stepped out of his Washington, DC, home to take a walk—specifically to walk from his house near the U.S. Capitol to New York City. This accounting of his undertaking is enriched by King's musings on the history, geography, architecture, people, small towns, and hidden places he encounters along his carefully-designed path. It's also a spiritual journey, as he reflects on his internal life in comparison to the values and priorities he observes as he passes through various communities and meets an array of fascinating individuals. King, who began his career as an overseas investigative reporter, is a great storyteller, and every brief, satisfying chapter rises and falls over the course of a few days of travel, creating uniquely complete scenarios. He includes a map of his route, and black-and-white sketches introduce every chapter. Armchair travelers will enjoy being taken along on King's walk and will be grateful that he chose to share his emotional wanderings too. —*Kathleen McBroom*

History

A Cultural Encyclopedia of Lost Cities and Civilizations.

By Michael Shally-Jensen and Anthony Vivian.

2022. 335p. illus. ABC-CLIO, $97 (9781440873102). 930.003.

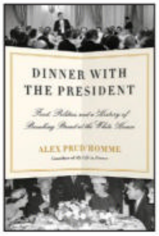


Why do civilizations rise and fall? This volume attempts to help readers unravel this mystery. It explores cities and civilizations across the world, from prehistoric to premodern times. Five extremely useful maps show the locations explored in the work. The 87 entries are alphabetically arranged, and there is a geographically arranged list as well. Each entry starts with a brief introduction followed by a survey of the city's inhabitants, historical background, culture and society, and demise. This is followed by the civilization's current status. Some of the cities covered are still vibrant but past their heyday (such as Timbuktu and Athens), while others (such as Petra and Taxila) have been abandoned. Each entry is cross-referenced and provides additional references. Typical entries are less than six pages, easy to follow, and written for readers with little background on the topic. Individual entries could serve as an introduction to the city or civilization, the work as a whole could be the basis for studying general patterns of human society, and the introduction and current-status essays could be sources for spawning discussion questions. Overall, an excellent reference. —*Muhammed Hassanali*

Dinner with the President: Food, Politics, and a History of Breaking Bread at the White House.

By Alex Prud'homme.

Feb. 2023. 512p. illus. Knopf, $35 (9781524732219). 973.09.

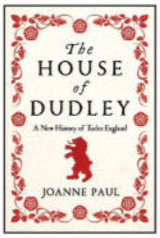


Nodding to Lin-Manuel Miranda, Prud'homme (*The French Chef in America*, 2016) characterizes sharing a meal with the president as being "in the dining room where it happens." Prud'homme starts with Thomas Jefferson's pre-presidential dinner with Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, a sumptuous repast of French cooking and wines that softened rivalries, yielding a compromise to restructure the nation's debt and determine its capital city. Across the centuries, other presidents used the White House dining room to similarly cajole other leaders to reach goals consistent with the president's wishes. George Washington never resided in the White House, but his enslaved chef, Hercules, produced renowned foods for the Washingtons' constant stream of visitors. Abraham Lincoln often failed to eat, immersed in wartime duties. U. S. Grant hosted the first reigning monarch to visit the White House: Kalakaua, King of the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Dwight Eisenhower liked to do his own cooking, particularly breakfast and barbecue. The Kennedys favored haute cuisine, and Lyndon Johnson brought Texas chili. By the twenty-first century, food became a mainstream national obsession, and presidents had to acknowledge it. With much insight into human behavior, Prud'homme has confected an appealing, panoramic history of power dining for both foodies and students of politics and statecraft. —*Mark Knoblauch*

The House of Dudley: A New History of Tudor England.

By Joanne Paul.

Mar. 2023. 528p. Pegasus, $35 (9781639363285); e-book (9781639363292). 942.05.



The Tudor family ruled England throughout one of its most consequential eras. Many historians have grappled with those larger-than-life Tudor kings and queens, who figure prominently in fictional narratives as well. Joanne Paul looks at the Tudors through the lens of the Dudley family. The Dudleys supported the Tudors while constantly conniving for their own ends, amassing fortunes at others' expense. After Edward VI's brief reign and demise, the Dudleys promoted the candidacy of Lady Jane Grey as queen in lieu of either of Henry's daughters. Instead, Mary took the throne and had Jane and her husband executed. That might have seemed the Dudley family's end, but others came back into favor during Elizabeth I's reign, notably Robert Dudley, who became suitor to the Virgin Queen. Paul clearly relishes this tale of intrigue and ably handles the mass of people who bore the Dudley name, keeping them as distinctive as possible despite the repetition of the similar names. Her scene-setting descriptions rival those of Hilary Mantel. An appendix and glossary offer real aid to the perplexed. Readers who relish the vast scope of *Game of Thrones* will revel in this decidedly nonfictional epic. —*Mark Knoblauch*

La Duchesse: The Life of Marie de Vignerot—Cardinal Richelieu's Forgotten Heiress Who Shaped the Fate of France.

By Bronwen McShea.

Mar. 2023. 480p. illus. Pegasus, $28.95 (9781639363476); e-book (9781639363483). 920.9.

The life and achievements of magnanimous French duchess and governor Marie-Madeleine de Vignerot du Pont de Courlay are finally explored in intimate detail after centuries of being overlooked. Already married and widowed by 18, Marie would grow to become the head of the Richelieu family, inheriting the land and wealth of her uncle, the famed Cardinal Richelieu. Her skill, cleverness, and foresight allowed her to go toe to toe with political opponents such as Marie de Medici, play pivotal roles in the French civil war, reform the Catholic Church in France, and gain then-unheard-of power for a woman in being granted both a duchy and a governorship. This biography transports readers to seventeenth-century France, absolutely immersing them in the enmeshment of royal politics, religion, and gender roles as Marie masters and changes each one of them forever, cementing her place in French history. Perfect for readers of French, women's, and religious history as well as biography. —*Kathleen Townsend*

A Stone Is Most Precious Where It Belongs: A Memoir of Uyghur Exile, Hope, and Survival.

By Gulchehra Hoja.

Feb. 2023. 320p. Hachette, $29 (9780306828843); e-book (9780306828867). 951.

Hoja carries with her a stone from her homeland, in remembrance of her life before her family was torn apart. While working as a television host for the Chinese official media, the author realized that the government that employed her was actually destroying her. During this time period, there were known efforts to spread Chinese propaganda through bilingual reeducation programs in the country's Uyghur region—in reality, a step towards the annihilation of Uyghur culture. By forcing Han traditions and ideals on the Uyghur people, Chinese officials effectively backed the region into a corner. The author defected and published a story through Radio Free Asia about internment camps that were being used to forcibly eradicate the Uyghur people, language, and culture, starting a chain reaction that couldn't be stopped. All members of Hoja's family were removed from their homes and put into internment camps in an act of retaliation. Debut memoirist Hoja balances detailed writing with the well-related emotions of her painful experiences. Her story is one that needs to be shared. —*BoDean Warnock*

Adult Fiction

General Fiction

Blue Hunger.

By Viola Di Grado. Tr. by Jamie Richards.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Bloomsbury, $26 (9781635579499).

In this novel's opening sentence, the narrator explains that when her lover Xu, "naked and bad," bites her, "everything is good." Naked, bad, good, and biting are apt adjectives to describe the world captured in DiGrado's (*Hollow Heart*, 2019) fourth novel translated from the Italian. Mourning the death of her twin brother by taking the trip he dreamed of from Rome to Shanghai, the narrator is bounced around equally by the city's spectacular imagery and by Xu's off-again-on-again love. The narrator cocoons in her hard-to-find hotel, waiting for a typhoon to pass or for a WhatsApp chat from Xu with meeting instructions, both events having the same emotional effect. As their relationship deepens, Xu brings the narrator to empty, repurposed buildings, gives her yellow pills, and erotically bites her with the strength to draw blood. Readers will be fascinated by the novel's scenery, psychological acuity, and even of Xu's room, filled with rotting food that she needs around. Queerness, grief, isolation, dependence, and love merge in this novel of geographically-based healing and descent. —*Emily Dziuban*

A Brief History of Living Forever.

By Jaroslav Kalfar.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Little, Brown, $28 (9780316463188).

Kalfar follows *Spaceman of Bohemia* (2017), adapted for a Netflix movie starring Adam Sandler, with a tale that begins in 2029, when Adéla Slavíková receives a fatal diagnosis from her doctor and is summarily fired from her cashier job and replaced by a robot. Unmoored, Adéla leaves the home she shares with her aged mother and sullen grown son in the Czech Republic to journey to a now totalitarian America to track down Tereza, the daughter she gave up for adoption. Her reunion with Tereza, who works for a tech company devoted to making humans immortal, is a happy but brief one. Adéla dies in her hotel room soon after they meet. When she discovers that she's able to stay among the living, though without being able to interact with them, Adéla follows her daughter and son as they finally connect and join forces on a risky quest. With piercing insights into human nature and the way we live now, Kalfar paints a compelling and convincing portrait of a near future rife with dangerous nationalism and perilous technological advances. —*Kristine Huntley*

★ A Broken People's Playlist.

By Chimeka Garricks.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Harper, $24.99 (9780063268180); e-book (9780063268203).

A dozen interlinked, music-oriented stories set in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, where Garricks was raised, form an ode to feel-good moments (falling in love, finding second chances, reveling in gratitude) and grating dissonances (cheating spouses, living with regret, longing for forgiveness, grieving for a loved one). Readers will feel both bewildered by and invested in the interconnected and fractured lives of friends, lovers, and family members who long for peace and redemption. In "Music," an aspiring DJ vows never to follow his womanizing father's footsteps, but later in "Desperado," heartbreaking details emerge as to why he was unable to keep his promise. In "Hurt," a pampered son stages his own funeral as his older brother, also seen in "Love's Divine," tries to make up for his shortcomings. "In the City" presents a young man with a promising future caught in the crosshairs of police brutality. "River" highlights the violence in confraternities (secret student groups) in Nigerian universities. Friends ponder the meaning of true love, "when you've unloved the unlovely, the imperfect," in "Beautiful War." Each songlike story feels like a breakout hit encapsulating the brokenness and the beauty in life's soundtrack. —*Andrienne Cruz*

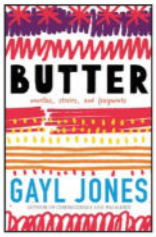
CHIMEKA GARRICKS
A BROKEN PEOPLE'S PLAYLIST

★ Butter: Novellas, Stories, and Fragments.

By Gayl Jones.

Apr. 2023. 200p. Beacon, $24.95 (9780807030011).

Jones' dazzling return after a long hiatus with several recent releases, including *The Bird Catcher* (2022), continues apace with this collection of new and revised novellas, fragments, and short stories as varied and diverse as the settings and the characters who inhabit them. As in her previous works, National Book Award finalist Jones explores expansive themes through the perspectives of richly drawn, fascinating characters who are often out of place and time. The titular novella portrays a photographer, Odelle, who encounters her famous mother for the first time as an adult. We travel backwards through Odelle's memories and with her in the present as she contemplates her various relationships, including with her absent, yet perpetually influential mother. The final part, "The Lost Stories," contains snippets that at once feel like the beginnings of longer works and simultaneously perfectly worded glimpses into lives in medias res. There is a dreamlike quality as we enter the minds of these characters that is inviting and effective. Even in the briefest of fragments, Jones injects enough detail to create a fulfilling story. In "A Spy Story", the characters meet and gather over a dinner of stew and in four short pages, as is true for the collection as a whole, the reader is left feeling full and satisfied. —*Allison Escoto*



Commitment.

By Mona Simpson.

Mar. 2023. 416p. Knopf, $29 (9780593319277); e-book (9780593319284).

As a single mother of three, Diane does everything she can to provide an upwardly mobile life, even going so far as to falsify the family's home address so Walter, Lina, and Donny can attend a better school. But the strain of keeping up appearances in class-conscious Los Angeles of the 1970s is staggering, and once Walter is safely sent off to UC Berkeley, Diane suffers a mental breakdown. While Walter cobbles together odd jobs and aid packages to finance his education, Lina and Donny still must navigate their own ways to adulthood, accomplishing much through the selfless generosity of Diane's best friend, Julie, who cares for them in all the ways their mother can't. Lina's goals of college and an art career look to be permanently derailed until a team of mentors helps her get into Barnard College, while Donny loses himself to street life and addiction. Acclaimed novelist Simpson's latest is a vast and multifaceted tale of one family's mutual dedication and loyalty that powerfully demonstrates the importance of community. —*Carol Haggas*

YA: *: Resilience, focus, and faith shine in this buoyant tale of three teen siblings navigating their coming-of-age journeys. CH.*

Community Board.

By Tara Conklin.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Mariner, $30 (9780062959379); e-book (9780062959393).

When her husband abruptly leaves her, 30-year-old Darcy finds herself adrift. Cut off from her old couple friends and even her job, she decides to return to her beloved hometown, a quaint village in western Massachusetts, and her parents' comforting arms. But she arrives to an empty house. Her parents, youthful retirees, have decided to spend a year in Arizona. Darcy stays, existing on her mom's basement stash of canned goods and interacting with the outside world via the town's online message board. There, protected by anonymity, she is inspired to act. She rescues lost pets, solves a murder mystery, and helps a new family navigate a political hate campaign. Slowly, she starts to build her own community based on her own values, as she both gives and receives support in unexpected ways. Conklin (*The Last Romantics*, 2019) delivers a winning third novel, with Darcy's smart, introspective voice at the heart of it. Her unconventional adventures (often hilarious, always interesting) drive home the importance of community and how important it is to show up and participate. —*Jane Harper*

The Dog of the North.

By Elizabeth McKenzie.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Penguin, $28 (9780593300695); e-book (9780593300701).

This zany and fun novel follows Penny as she romps her way around California in the Dog of the North, an old, inherited van with charming curtains and crap brakes. Fresh off a sad but inevitable divorce, Penny leaves Santa Cruz behind for exciting new ventures while still reeling from the mysterious disappearance of her mother and stepfather in Australia and the more recent (and unrelated) arrest of her grandmother after extremely incriminating evidence was found on her property. McKenzie (*The Portable Veblen*, 2016) utilizes California's inherently eccentric identity to the advantage of this wild plot. Anything and everything are possible here, like a Pomeranian named Kweecoats (pronounced like "QuickOats," with a French accent). The whims of old men must be managed and an infected stab wound from a potentially rat-kissed brooch monitored. Penny is always sharp, ready for the other shoe to drop, and lovable. This spinning, upside-down roller coaster of a novel is a delightful portrait of the definitive chaos of love and family and perfect for fans of Carl Hiassen and George Saunders. —*Courtney Eathorne*

Dog on Fire.

By Terese Svoboda.

Mar. 2023. 188p. Univ. of Nebraska, paper, $19.95 (9781496235169).

A woman, her family, and a remote Midwestern town are all haunted by the death of her brother in Svoboda's (*The Great American Desert*, 2019) searing rumination on the boundaries of grief. Svoboda's unnamed narrator, a divorced woman with a teenage son, returns to her hometown following her brother's death. The siblings were close in age, which brings an intimate, unsettling element to the disturbingly murky circumstances surrounding the tragedy. Did he have a seizure? Drug overdose? Or was it murder? The answers may be found in his curious relationship with Aphra, the only named character in the novel, a grossly overweight woman with a reputation for promiscuity. Aphra claims to have been the brother's lover and now sets her sights on the woman's teenage son, stalking the family to the point of violence. Told from both the sister's and Aphra's viewpoints through a lens of menace and escalating tension, Svoboda's alternating narrative reveals how each woman copes with the depths of loneliness and heights of uncertainty in the aftermath of a sudden death. —*Carol Haggas*

Dust Child.

By Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Algonquin, $28 (9781643752754).

Acclaimed Vietnamese activist and best-selling writer Quế Mai (*The Mountains Sing*, 2020) draws for her second novel on interviews and research to explore the lasting effects of the Vietnam War, particularly on the children of American servicemen and Vietnamese women. Abandoned at birth and ostracized as a dark-skinned Amerasian, Phong is desperate to prove his parentage so that his wife and children will qualify for immigrant visas and a better life in the U.S. Meanwhile, American veteran Dan has reluctantly returned to Vietnam with his wife, who hopes the trip will help with his debilitating PTSD. Dan undertakes a clandestine search for Kim, a Vietnamese bar girl whose pregnancy he knew about but never acknowledged. Quế Mai adeptly balances these contemporary narratives with Phong's early experiences and the wartime story of sisters Trang and Quynh, who seek jobs in Saigon but are quickly ensnared in the shadowy world of nightclubs and sex work. There are no clear heroes or villains here as characters' actions and choices are shaped by their circumstances and the war's legacy. —*Lindsay Harmon*

The Fake.

By Zoe Whittall.

Mar. 2023. 208p. Ballantine, $28 (9781524799441).

Gibson is struggling with postdivorce loneliness and on the cusp of 40 when he meets Cammie. He's instantly smitten with this free-spirited, independent woman. He soon learns that Cammie has her own struggles, which include kidney cancer, an abusive boyfriend, and a family history of depression and suicide that has her attending a grief-support group. There, Cammie meets Shelby, who has barely left the house since her wife, Kate, died. Shelby is immediately drawn to Cammie, too. As Gibson and Shelby get to know Cammie better, cracks in her too-good-to-be-true facade begin to appear. And once Gibson and Shelby get to know each other, the floodgates open, revealing the lies that Cammie has carefully crafted. Whittall (*The Spectacular*, 2021) explores the ways that people believe what they need to believe—and how that impulse can be exploited. Both Gibson and Shelby's perspectives are presented in alternating chapters, with an opening and closing statement from Cammie that both sets up her con and shares her motivation. Fans of Janelle Brown will be drawn to this twisty tale of a master manipulator. —*Nanette Donohue*

Good for You.

By Camille Pagán.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Amazon/Lake Union, $28.99 (9781542038034); e-book (9781542038027).

Aly loves her job as editor in chief of women's magazine *All Good*, but when she overhears two of her employees gossiping about her, she snaps, and the incident is caught on video. Forced to take a leave of absence, Aly decamps to her late brother Luke's house in Michigan to start the long-delayed process of preparing it for sale. But when she arrives in Saugatuck, she finds Luke's friend Wyatt living in squalor. It turns out that Luke left the house to both of them, and Wyatt has no intention of selling. Over the next few weeks, the uneasy peace between Aly and Wyatt becomes a connection strengthened by their shared grief. Now Aly must make sense of her past before she can move forward. Pagán (*Everything Must Go*, 2022) demonstrates her ability to create likable characters with realistic issues. The romantic subplot is more prominent than in her earlier books, making this a good choice for readers of both women's fiction and contemporary romance. Fans of Emily Henry, Linda Holmes, and Kate Clayborn will feel right at home in Aly and Wyatt's beach house. —*Nanette Donohue*

The Gospel of Orla.

By Eoghan Wells.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Seven Stories, paper, $16.95 (9781644212820).

This entrancing debut is told in the voice of Orla, a 14-year-old who lives in a village in the north of England. Her mother has recently died, and her father self-medicates with alcohol, which often leaves Orla in charge of looking after her much younger sister, Lily. Orla is regularly in trouble at school, largely for shoplifting, which she does in part to help her collect food for her planned escape to Ireland, where her mother is buried. On one of her attempted escapes, she runs into a mysterious man, whom she then witnesses perform seemingly impossible acts. From here the story becomes an odd-couple road novel, one full of pathos and humor. It is also a coming-of-age story, one that follows Orla's grief through the filter of her righteous teenage rage, her cast-iron belief in her own worldliness, and her childlike vulnerability. She is a brilliantly engaging protagonist. By blending a fable-like structure and Orla's grittily realistic voice, Wells has created a consistently surprising, evocative, almost impossible to put down, and gloriously original work. —*Alexander Moran*

YA: *YAs will enjoy engaging and funny teen Orla, who swears a lot as she wrestles with grief, anger, and faith. AM.*

The Great Reclamation.

By Rachel Heng.

Mar. 2023. 464p. Riverhead, $28 (9780593420119); e-book (9780593420133).

The twentieth century saw Singapore transform from a British colony into an independent nation. This dizzying historical period forms the backdrop of Ah Boon's life. The youngest son of a fisherman, Ah Boon is uncertain of his place in the world. He alone can find a set of islands that disappear at random. With this ability comes prosperity for his family and the respect of his village. As his confidence grows, so does his love for Siok Mei, a militant girl who serves as the co-protagonist. Fans of Heng's sf-tinged debut, *Suicide Club* (2018), might expect the speculative element to play a bigger role, but the islands are an important plot point for the first hundred pages or so, then lose relevance for long stretches of time. Much more developed is Ah Boon's evolving relationship to authority. As Ah Boon grows into adulthood, Heng paints a striking portrait of a man struggling to find his place in history. The novel is ultimately a well-rendered piece of historical fiction that questions who gets left behind in the march toward progress. —*Zeja Z. Copes*

YA: *Older teens, especially those interested in political and historical fiction, will appreciate Heng's sensitive portrayal of Ah Boon's first love and teenage activism. ZZC.*

House of Cotton.

By Monica Brashears.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Flatiron, $27.99 (9781250851918).

A young woman in Tennessee receives an odd yet intriguing business proposal in this startling, vivid, and impressive Southern Gothic debut novel. Magnolia has just lost her beloved grandmother, Mama Brown, the woman who raised her. Estranged from her drug-addicted mother, quickly running out of money, and trying to cope with loneliness, Magnolia engages in risky behavior. So when an eccentric man named Cotton approaches her with a morbid job opportunity, to act as the doppelganger of missing and deceased people in order to help their loved ones achieve closure, she accepts. Magnolia soon moves into Cotton's home, alongside his alcoholic aunt, Eden, and finds herself entangled in increasingly bizarre situations, all while being visited by the ghost of Mama Brown. Brashears has written a lush, pictorial, and often steamy novel with an indelible heroine. Coupling classic gothic elements with a realistic portrayal of the issues facing a young, poor, Black woman with few options, the novel's many strengths culminate in a powerful and original story that will appeal to a variety of readers across fiction genres. *—Allison Escoto*

If We're Being Honest.

By Cat Shook.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Macmillan/Celadon, $28 (9781250847546); e-book (9781250847553).

In a deep-south small town in Georgia, the Williams patriarch, 82-year-old Gerry, has suddenly passed away from a heart attack. The revelations at his funeral are about to make his clan question everything they thought they knew, especially his four grandchildren, Alice, Delia, Grant, and Red. Their dynamics take center stage in this witty family drama. Different Williamses tell the story from their own perspectives, giving the reader a wider view of the situation, diving into their separate lives, including struggles, fears, and insecurities. All of the characters are dealing with messy lives and issues: an unplanned pregnancy, possible affairs, chaotic love lives, and coming out. Readers will experience the nuances of their individual grief as they process their losses, in the midst of anger and dismay at the recent surprises about a man they all loved deeply. The Williams family will never be the same, the only question is: will they change for the worse or for the better? *—Tessa Terry*

In Other Lifetimes All I've Lost Comes Back to Me.

By Courtney Sender.

Mar. 2023. 208p. West Virginia Univ., paper, $19.99 (9781952271786); e-book (9781952271793).

Sender's debut short-story collection finds characters navigating the cosmic turbulence of love and heartbreak and the unrelenting gulf of absence. Many of the loosely linked tales dramatize human connections shifting with the passage of time, while ghosts of the past linger at the periphery. In "For Somebody So Sacred," narrator Bridget meets artist Kaye when she visits the art gallery where Bridget works. While Bridget is immediately drawn to Kaye, their intense relationship is tested nearly as soon as it begins. Years later, in "From Somebody So Scared," the perspectives shift as narrator Kaye is visited by the now married Bridget, with an alternating account of their short-lived romance and the depth of heartbreak in what was left behind. In "To Lose Everything I Have Ever Loved," Dinah's lover Samuel leaves his wife to commit to Dinah. Though this is what Dinah has yearned for, she quickly finds herself plagued by doubts. Sender's intimate worlds explore the hollows of the real and imagined, bringing to life emotions and connections too unwieldy to define or restrain. *—Leah Strauss*

In The Orchard.

By Eliza Minot.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Knopf, $28 (9780307593474); e-book, $13.99 (9780593535929).

Maisie Moore has just had her fourth child, and as she sits in bed nursing her baby and listening to her husband and other children sleep, she can't help but think. Written from Maisie's point of view, this is a deep dive into the mind of a mother, with a stream-of-conciousness fluidity and randomness that make for interesting and beautiful reading. In her thoughts, readers get to explore the intricacies of motherhood and everyday life with her four children, her regrets, the mundane moments, and glimpses of wonder. Her thoughts bounce from the present day to her recollections of her own childhood and adolescence. The death of Maisie's mother while Maisie was still a small child left her trying to navigate womanhood without a map. For as long as she can remember, she has been intrigued by how her body works; from puberty to pregnancy to nursing her babies, she sees a miracle in the nature of things. Deeply personal and moving, this is an intimate look inside modern life and motherhood. *—Tessa Terry*

★ The King Is Dead.

By Walter Tevis.

Feb. 2023. 304p. Vintage, paper, $17 (9780593467527); e-book (9780593467534).

THE KING IS DEAD
STORIES
WALTER TEVIS

Walter Tevis (1928–84) wrote only six novels but among them are such modern classics as *The Hustler* and its sequel *The Color of Money*; *The Man Who Fell to Earth*; and *The Queen's Gambit*—all of which have been made into award-winning films or TV series. Although a collection of some of Tevis' short fiction was released in the early 1980s and reprinted in 2014, this new book features all of his shorter works, collected together for the first time. It is, in a word, a glorious book. Tevis is best known for novels set in pool halls and around chess boards, and fittingly, one story here concerns Eddie Felson, hero of *The Hustler*, and another finds a chess master matching wits with a fellow competitor in a prison yard. As a plotter, Tevis was an efficient storyteller: he didn't usually go in for wild twists and big shocks. As a stylist, he was remarkably subtle; his prose was lean and unadorned, his characters sketched in a few well-chosen words. But there is a dramatic weight to his stories that makes them deeply satisfying—small moments that make us take a second look at a character, or a slight shift in tone that changes the direction of a story. A fine introduction to Tevis' masterful writing. *—David Pitt*

Lonely Hearts Book Club.

By Lucy Gilmore.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Sourcebooks/Casablanca, paper, $16.99 (9781728256214).

Gilmore, a multigenre author writing under several pen names, turns her attention to contemporary fiction. Sloane Parker is devoted to her job at Coeur d'Alene's library, in Idaho. New to the field, Sloane still has stars in her eyes. Despite her passion for literature and helping people, though, she considers herself bland. When she meets Arthur McLachlan, a curmudgeon who visits the library in search of people to insult, Sloane finds herself jabbing back. Their banter becomes a daily occurrence, until Arthur doesn't show up one day. Sloane breaks library rules to find him, ultimately losing her job. To keep the ill man entertained, Sloane starts a new book club, including neighbor Maisey, coworker Mateo, and Arthur's grandson, Greg. These characters' stories are daisy-chained together to form the overarching plot. Maisey in particular has a touching arc that explores her lack of connection to her teen daughter. Though the premise may ring false to library workers, readers who enjoy unlikely relationships will be able to suspend disbelief for this funny and charming band of book lovers. *—Cari Dubiel*

A Manual for How to Love Us.

By Erin Slaughter.

Mar. 2023. 304p. HarperPerennial, paper, $18.99 (9780063230880).

In Slaughter's stunningly fierce debut (she's written two collections of poetry), women find resilience on the edge of survival and loss. Set in the South, the collection of short stories opens with Zell and Andrea, childhood friends who often reconnect in moments of life and death: lightning, bullets, funerals. In another tale, a member of a throuple is tasked with securing a nanny for their child in Florida, igniting questions on the group's dynamic and the member's own waning significance in it. And the titular story, composed of haunting vignettes, acts as a guide to mother, father, and other family members, redefining common themes like home or hero for the reader. Though some of the main characters remain nameless, they all share an unshakable force that pushes them through grief and fear. Slaughter intentionally blurs the line between real and unreal and ghosts and people, creating a spellbinding tilt across stories and worlds. This dark but whimsical collection is perfect for fans of magical realism and strong female characters. *—Allison Cho*

The Mostly True Story of Tanner & Louise.

By Colleen Oakley.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Berkley, $27 (9780593200803); e-book, $14.99 (9780593200810).

Tanner Quimby needs a job and a place to live after losing her career as a soccer player, so she moves in with curmudgeonly octogenarian Louise Wilt. Then Tanner sees something on the evening news: an age-progressed photo of a woman who resembles Mrs. Wilt is described as the prime suspect in a 1970s jewelry heist. Soon after, Louise awakens Tanner in the middle of the night, insisting that they leave immediately in the mint-green, vintage Jaguar that Louise has stowed in her garden shed along with a pistol and a bag full of cash. As the duo make their way from Atlanta to California, they begin to face their pasts while evading the FBI and a mobster set on revenge. Oakley (*The Invisible Husband of Frick Island*, 2021) spins a clever intergenerational story about two mismatched women who have more in common than they expected. Louise is a delight, an earthy, honest older woman, and the story is full of clever surprises. This lively odd-couple caper will appeal to fans of Fredrik Backman and Rachel Joyce. —*Nanette Donohue*

The New Earth.

By Jess Row.

Mar. 2023. 592p. Ecco, $32.99 (9780062400635).

Beginning in 2018, Row's (*White Flights*, 2019) stupendously good novel portrays the Wilcoxes, a Jewish family from the Upper West Side. There's domineering Naomi, a famous climate scientist; Sandy, Naomi's husband, a meek lawyer; their son, Patrick, a Buddhist and quantum computing expert; and their daughter, Winter, an overworked immigration lawyer engaged to Zeno, who is undocumented. The family has splintered over two traumas. Naomi revealed that her father was Black, turning this in part into a novel about passing. Then, after this revelation, Bering, the youngest child, left to become a peace activist in the West Bank, where she was murdered by an Israeli sniper. Like Franzen's *The Corrections* (2001), this is a family saga with a global perspective, sweeping across borders and time, from Israel to Chiapas to the northeastern U.S., from the utopian communes of the 1970s to the present, and exploring the impending climate disaster, colonialism, race, identity, and wealth, along with some metafictional musing. Each character's story is a fascinating portal into contemporary life, adding up to a deeply moving, wonderfully engaging, and truly remarkable novel of the times. —*Alexander Moran*

None of This Is Serious.

By Catherine Prasifka.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Canongate, paper, $18 (9781838855567); e-book (9781838855543).

Sophie is a recent university graduate living at home in Dublin with her parents and in the shadow of her twin sister. She spends her days applying for jobs, for most of which she is rejected, and doomscrolling on the internet. Her social life is turbulent at best. Then there is Rory, a boy who seems to share Sophie's passion for politics and her compulsive internet use as a defense mechanism against the real world. But Sophie only knows how to talk to him behind the shield of a computer screen. When an inexplicable streak of light appears in the sky, it's just what she needs to spiral deeper into a hole of existential dread. Irish writer Prasifka's debut is a decisively contemporary novel, steeped in references to internet culture, social media, and Gen Z nihilism. Prasifka attempts to encapsulate the voice of a generation, and the result is a story told through a perspective so vivid that reading it mimics the experience of Sophie's doomscrolling: readers will be fully engrossed in Sophie's mess, unable to look away. —*Abeje Schnake*

YA: *Sophie and her social commentary, as well as Prasifka's writing style, will appeal to YAs. AS.*

Now You See Us.

By Balli Kaur Jaswal.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Morrow, $30 (9780063161603); e-book (9780063161627).

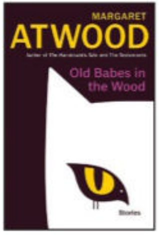
Jaswal (*The Unlikely Adventures of the Shergill Sisters*, 2019) presents a tale about three Filipino domestic workers in Singapore. In her fifties, Corazon is a longtime helper who sticks to her routines and observes boundaries. Angel is a lesbian with a broken heart, who mostly keeps to herself and plans to become a nurse's assistant. Donita is a feisty newbie who skirts around the unspoken rules of the job and does whatever she wants. A suspicious death riles the wealthy neighborhood in which they all work, and the blame is pinned on Flordeliza, the household maid. Though busy with their own problems, as the news spreads across social media, the women are propelled to act when they uncover critical details that convince them that Flordeliza may be innocent. Jaswal's well-crafted novel blends mystery, social commentary, and human drama into a fascinating amalgam that highlights the plight of decidedly unseen women undertaking cheap labor that exposes them to all sorts of abuse. The story feels authentic and is timely as it portrays enterprising women and the unfortunate circumstances that galvanize them. —*Andrienne Cruz*

Old Babes in the Wood.

By Margaret Atwood.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Doubleday, $30 (9780385549073).

As Atwood's wry title suggests, women, aging, and nature are at play in this bountiful short-story collection. Half of the 15 tales, most appearing for the first time, star Nell and Tig, two independent spirits enamored of books, remote places, adventurous hikes, good food, and each other. Long married, they're now deploying humor and strategic evasions to contend with the diabolical diminishments of age. These are love stories spiked with shrewd observations and vivid memories as Nell watches Tig gradually lose his robustness, ultimately leaving her to navigate confounding new terrain. Houses and objects are redolent with the couple's different temperaments and mutual adoration; incidents are at once profound and absurd. "Grieving takes strange forms," Atwood writes, and, indeed, she examines the surprises of grief with acuity, wit, and intimacy in stories pithy and sustained. A particularly complex and haunting tale, "A Dusty Lunch," spotlights Tig's father, Canada's youngest brigadier during WWII. Astute, flinty, and deft, Atwood portrays longtime women friends in bantering camaraderie and an "evil mother" who may or may not be a witch, tells a dystopian tale of a virus-ruled future, and, in the title story, brings Nell and her sister, Lizzie, to their family's old, very rustic cabin. Atwood is, once again, exacting, mischievous, funny, insightful, virtuoso, and spellbinding. —*Donna Seaman*



HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Atwood's legions of avid readers will pounce on her first short-story collection since *Stone Mattress* (2014).

Old God's Time.

By Sebastian Barry.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Viking, $28 (9780593296103).

His attempted retirement upended by the reopening of an old murder case, a troubled detective clings to memories of love. Alone in a shack overlooking the turbulent Irish Sea, Tom Kettle tries not to have any thoughts. In this he is unsuccessful. The ghosts of his beloved wife, June, and their two grown children, all three now dead, persist. Police officers from the old station, investigating a new lead into the death of a monstrous priest, pay Tom a visit. They want his professional perspective but also a sample of his DNA. Tom's tenuous hold on reality, tethered to minor routine and the rhythms of an unattached pensioner, gives way to dreamlike reveries of longing and loss. His days fill themselves with the humiliations of aging and the interventions of the dead. Barry (*A Thousand Moons*, 2020) masterfully explores the "deep deep chaos" of Tom's perforated soul with poetry, poignancy, and a splash of indignant rage. The classic crime-story chestnut—a mothballed cop yanked back into action—becomes a parable of grief and theological anguish, a contemporary Irish answer to the book of Job. —*Brendan Driscoll*

Pride.

By Victoria Christopher Murray.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Gallery, paper, $17.99 (9781668012901); e-book (9781668012918).

In the propulsive fifth installment of her Seven Deadly Sins series, following *Wrath* (2021), Murray continues to deliver heart-pounding parables of the rise and fall of success-driven women and their ultimate redemption from sin. After her mother reluctantly gave her away to be raised by a Christian woman of means, Journee Alexander vowed to never speak to her mother again, even after her baby sister made contact and reunited their broken family. Despite her difficult childhood, Journee is proud that she is one of Houston's top real-estate brokers, but someone knows how she and her corrupt mentor earned their ill-gotten gains and is threatening revenge. Journee turns to her ex, Ethan, the best criminal defense attorney in Texas, and he advises her to lay low before the feds find out what she's been hiding, but she's compelled to discover who the culprit is. Could it be her new beau, or her ex-best friend, or her unethical mentor? Murray's fans will enjoy watching this compelling seven-part series unfold on A&E, as each installment has been optioned for an original Lifetime movie. *—Kristina Giovanni*

Rootless.

By Krystle Zara Appiah.

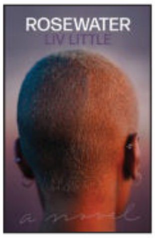
Mar. 2023. 368p. Ballantine, $27 (9780593500453); e-book (9780593500460).

As this heart-wrenching novel opens, Sam is devastated by the sudden disappearance of his wife, Efe. Rewinding time from that first chapter, readers learn the origins of Sam and Efe's tumultuous relationship. Both of Ghanaian heritage, they've had a connection since their first meeting in high school. After other lovers and near misses, the two finally become a couple, marry, and have a daughter, Olivia. But Efe's sorrow is deep and constant, spanning all the way back to her childhood and the abuse she endured from classmates. Her very religious family, friends, and even Sam have never put her first. Chapters alternate between Sam and Efe's points of view; Sam's own past as an abandoned child explains why he centers himself in their relationship. Despite their great love, Sam refuses to acknowledge Efe's struggles with motherhood, society's expectations of her as a mother, and her own mental illness. While Appiah's debut is harrowing and terribly sad, readers will empathize with Efe as she searches for hope in spite of her burdens. *—Cari Dubiel*

★ Rosewater.

By Liv Little.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Zando, $27 (9781638930228); e-book (9781638930235).

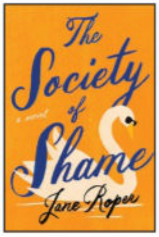


Journalist Little's debut novel incorporates the poetry of Kai-Isaiah Jamal to tell the story of Elsie, a queer, 28-year-old bartender, poet, and woman-about-town in south London. Elsie is reluctant to rely on others owing to her ongoing estrangement from her traditional Ghanaian family, illustrated by an extremely awkward visit from her parents. Eviction from her subsidized apartment coincides with the closure of the bar where she works, pushing her to move in with Juliet, a longtime friend she hasn't spoken with for several months. Settling into Juliet's place, hustling for writing gigs in between job interviews, and socializing on the literary scene keep Elsie busy in between long talks about life and watching *Drag Race* with Juliet. She longs to support herself with her writing, and her disappointment with each setback is palpably rendered. The reader gradually learns why Elsie and Juliet fell out of touch and recognizes their fundamental connection long before Elsie is prepared to confront it. This vividly rendered story of a dynamic young woman finding her way is a compelling and engaging read for fans of Talia Hibbert, Sally Rooney, and Candice Carty-Williams. The novel has been optioned for film development. *—Alene Moroni*

★ The Society of Shame.

By Jane Roper.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Anchor, $28 (9780593468760); e-book (9780593468777).

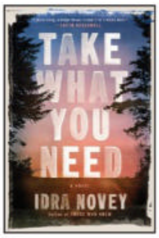


When Kathleen Held, perimenopausal wife of Senate candidate Bill Held, returns home to find her garage on fire, a soon-to-be-viral photograph captures more than that. Bill has his pants down with a young campaign staffer, and Kathleen has bled through her tampon and stained her pants. It's almost more humiliation than she can bear, but the internet picks up on her plight as a crusade, and the #YesWeBleed movement is born. Kathleen wants nothing to do with it, until she intercepts an invitation meant for Bill to the Society of Shame, which, run by a disgraced romance author, works behind the scenes to rehabilitate tarnished images. Soon Kathleen undergoes a makeover and goes by Kat Anderson Held. But while she is swept up in becoming the face of the movement, her earnest 12-year-old daughter, who is working to fight for real change, is less than impressed. Roper's latest is a hilarious romp through cancel culture, performative activism, and politics. She manages a fine balance between quippy humor and genuine emotion, and as Kat steps out of her husband's shadow, the book becomes a woman's journey of self-discovery and a mother-daughter story. Recommended for fans of Maria Semple and Laurie Gelman. *—Susan Maguire*

★ Take What You Need.

By Idra Novey.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Viking, $28 (9780593652855).



With her mountain hamlet dying around her house-by-house due to economic downturn and political upheaval, Jean, 66, lives an increasingly solitary existence back in her childhood home after a failed marriage. She doesn't miss her abusive ex but longs for her stepdaughter, Leah. Faced with reminders of her own violent childhood, Jean exorcises her demons through the creation of elaborate metal sculptures, employing Elliott, a sulky teenage neighbor, to help with the heavy lifting. A freak accident causes Jean to rely on Elliott until their fragile relationship shatters when he intuits that her need for him can be exploited. When Jean dies, Elliott beckons Leah home to claim her inheritance of Jean's iconic folk art oeuvre, but their reunion triggers painful memories for Leah. Revealing Leah's and Jean's tumultuous past through different viewpoints, Novey (*Those Who Knew*, 2018) explores the mysteries of the creative process, the precariousness of family, and the inherent biases toward unconventional behavior. Novey's richly complex third novel shows not only a nuanced appreciation for the artistic process but also places such creativity within the toxic distrust sewn by poverty, misogyny, and xenophobia. In Jean, Novey has constructed a cantankerous character whose artistic passion, fierce independence, and fragile emotional state make her impossible to forget. *—Carol Haggas*

YA: *Teenage Elliott's struggle to balance the need for emotional connection with the practicalities of survival will resonate with YAs. CH.*

Tell the Rest.

By Lucy Jane Bledsoe.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Akashic, $28.95 (9781636140797); e-book (9781636140827).

Delia Barnes and Ernest Wrangham first met at Celebration Camp, a horrific and baseless Christian conversion camp that targeted young people grappling with their sexuality. Their bond was fused forever when they escaped hand in hand, fleeing violence. Now adults, they're stumbling their way through relationships and careers. Delia's marriage to her wife has ended, and she lost her job coaching college basketball. Forced to return home and coach her alma mater's high-school team, she moves from the East Coast back to Oregon. Also on his way to the Pacific Northwest is Ernest, now a daring, successful poet with a temporary teaching gig. Ernest and Delia are sucked back into each other's orbit with no choice but to face the trauma they endured as young adults at Celebration Camp, returning to the roots of their pain in an effort to set themselves free. Delia and Ernest are beautiful, complicated characters, and their journey is important for readers to witness, as it also gives voice to voiceless victims of conversion torture. *—Courtney Eathorne*

When in Rome.

By Liam Callanan.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Dutton, $28 (9780593184073); e-book (9780593184097).

Claire has lived a pious life. She nearly gave up her spot at Yale to join the Society of Saint Clement, finding peace and solidarity among the nuns after her mother passed away. "Vowed life" never seemed like a sacrifice; her faith was ironclad and inexplicable. While she didn't end up joining the convent as a young woman, Claire built a career around churches, convents, and cemeteries through her work in commercial real estate. Her latest project brings her to Rome to help the Order of Saint Gertrude find a buyer for a convent that has fallen into financial hardship, but she's surprised to find a deeper connection to the property, the city, the language, the sisters. While 52 isn't too young to reevaluate and start a new chapter, is it too old to leave behind everything she's built? If *Eat, Pray, Love* was organized in a different order, it might feel a bit like Callanan's (*Paris by the Book*, 2018) introspective and genuine exploration of the sacrifices and opportunities that come with a new outlook on life. Taking a wide view of love of all types—platonic, spiritual, romantic, geographic—*When in Rome* should appeal to fans of Kate Atkinson, Kate Weinberg, and Emma Straub. —*Stephanie Turza*

White Cat, Black Dog.
By Kelly Link.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Random, $27 (9780593449950).

In her first collection since *Get in Trouble* (2015), Link uses fairy tales as a jumping-off point for seven stories that explore human connection. In "The White Cat's Divorce," the youngest son of a wealthy man participates in a competition set up by his father to see which of his sons will become his heir. In his quest to fulfill his father's increasingly outlandish requests, he comes across a house full of sentient cats, led by a lovely white cat who might be the answer to winning his father's contest. "Prince Hat Underground" finds Gary searching for his enchanting husband, Prince Hat, who Gary learns has been stolen away by his original fiancée, none other than the Queen of Hell herself. Gary undertakes a perilous journey down to Hell to see if he can wrest his husband back. The sf tale, "The Game of Smash and Recovery," finds two siblings stranded on a distant planet playing a game that leads to a startling revelation for one of them. This eclectic offering is bound to please Link's many devotees. —*Kristine Huntley*

Women Are the Fiercest Creatures.
By Andrea Dunlop.

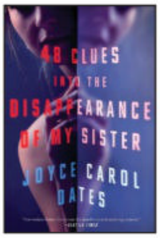
Mar. 2023. 312p. Zibby, $26.99 (9798985282801).

Strangers is a popular social-media platform. Its founder, Jake Sarnoff, is considered a tech darling. He's progressive and handsome and talks a lot about feminism. His company is about to go public, he's about to become a father again, and everybody's talking. What most don't know, though, is that Jake has a long line of women in his wake who have not only contributed to his success but have ensured it. Behind every great man, right? There's Anna, his ex-wife and the mother of his two sons. There's Jessica, his second wife and the mother of his new daughter. There's also Samanta, whose contributions to his life and business are as powerful as they are secret. All three women will be tempted and tested by Jake's impending wealth and his incredible charisma. Jake's desire to keep all three women on a string will also be his downfall. Dunlop's latest is a compelling and fascinating tale of performative feminism and the women who suffer under it. —*Melissa Minsker*

Crime Fiction

48 Clues into the Disappearance of My Sister.
By Joyce Carol Oates.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Mysterious, $26.95 (9781613163818); e-book (9781613163856).



Georgene's older sister, Marguerite, disappeared from the family home on April 11, 1991. Now, many years later, Georgene looks back on that time, reliving the disappearance and its aftermath. Oates' latest foray into crime fiction is another masterpiece of storytelling from a writer who jumps between genres and styles with amazing aplomb. The mystery of Marguerite is certainly compelling, but what really captures the reader here is Georgene herself and the way she tells the story. She seems envious, even jealous of her sister. She might even hate her, although she denies this at the outset. She refers to the police investigators, dismissively, as "fools." There are strong hints of sociopathy: "I do not like upset (unless it is an upset that I have caused myself) . . . But then I don't love anyone—much." So much more than the kind of standard-issue unreliable narrator, Georgene is a vastly complex character whose every word, every use of parentheses and italics, must be examined closely for intent. A thematically and stylistically ambitious novel that displays the author's literary gifts to their maximum effect. —*David Pitt*

All That Is Mine I Carry with Me.
By William Landay.

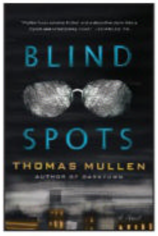
Mar. 2023. 336p. Bantam, $28.99 (9780345531841); e-book (9780345531858).

An author weighed down with writer's block seeks something real to write about and finds it in a longtime friend's harrowing account of his mother's sudden disappearance decades earlier. The title refers to a quote ("Omnia mea mecum porto") ascribed to a Greek sage meaning that knowledge is the one true valuable. The saying appears on the friend's sister's arm in the form of a tattoo. Landay focuses on the shadow the mother's disappearance has cast over the siblings' lives since childhood, and on the murky suspicion that hangs over their father. The writing itself seems almost deliberately murky here, switching gears often, at one point even including a "Gone Girl" letter from the mother to her children. The discovery of the woman's body, two decades after her disappearance, brings tensions to a boiling point. This is a toboggan ride of a novel, sometimes veering wildly, but its overall effect is exhilarating. Landay's *Defending Jacob* (2013) won the Strand Critics Award for best novel. —*Connie Fletcher*

Blind Spots.
By Thomas Mullen.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Minotaur, $27.99 (9781250842749); e-book (9781250842756).

It's been seven years since a highly contagious virus (or possibly a bioweapon), which came to be known as the Blinding, swept around the world and, over a period of months, took away humanity's sight. It was a catastrophic event, and even now the world is struggling to recover, to return to some sort of normality. The "vidders"—machines that pull in an array of virtual stimuli and then feed all of it directly to the wearer's brain—help. Sight, or something like it, has returned, but only to those who can afford a vidder. Mark Owens is a homicide detective; an old-school cop, who served on the force before the Blinding, he's having difficulties with his latest case, which involves a murder committed by someone who, according to a surviving witness, was entirely invisible to her vidder—just a black, featureless form. The tech experts say it's not possible, but Owens prefers to find his own answers, and what he finds could send the world plummeting back into chaos. The author of *The Last Town on Earth* (2006) and *Darktown* (2016) has outdone himself here: this is a tremendous crime-sf hybrid, a brilliantly conceived story impeccably told. A novel that will stay with you for a very long time. —*David Pitt*



Bloody Martini.
By William Kotzwinkle.

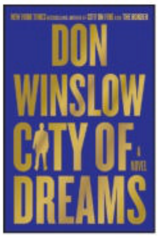
Feb. 2023. 350p. Blackstone, $26.99 (9781094009261).

Tommy Martini shows his hard-boiled PI creds right off in this riot of a novel, letting us know that he knows that "venomous reptiles give you a picture of the world as it really is." There are the required fistfights, explosions, betrayals, and used-up people with skin "the color of a poisonous white mushroom." But this is Kotzwinkle, who wrote the semi-raunchy E.T. novelization in which he had the little alien lusting after Henry's mom! Here, he rocks PI conventions. Martini is a monk, of all things, summoned back into the fray by a plea from a dying friend to take care of his widow. Martini's efforts lead him into the underbelly of a dying little town. But Kotzwinkle isn't Chandler looking sadly down from Olympus; no, he's mixing it up with the reptiles and bad blondes and having a fine time. For all the desolation, one has a sense of a writer gleefully deploying a splendid gift for creating bright images that illuminate a moment without distracting from it. After a tasering, Martini feels like "an electric eel had slithered through my nervous system." —*Don Crinklaw*

City of Dreams.
By Don Winslow.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Morrow, $30 (9780062851239); e-book (9780062851260).

The second volume in Winslow's Danny Ryan trilogy delivers on all the promise of its predecessor, *City on Fire* (2021). We left Rhode Island mobster Danny on the run at the end of the first book, which brilliantly uses parallels to Homer's *Iliad* to portray



a gang war between Italian and Irish mobs. The Homeric connection isn't as central here, but there are elements of both Aeneas and Odysseus in Danny's flight, as the defeated warrior leaves his own city on fire in search of sanctuary, embarking on a series of adventures along the way, including an unfortunate sojourn in Hollywood. Danny's stint as a movie producer blows his cover and lands him in the crosshairs of old and new enemies, leading to the kind of climactic conflagration that distinguishes Winslow's Cartel trilogy. Before that, however, the author makes time for some highly acidic satire about life in the goldfish bowl of Hollywood, but finally, this is a novel about bad men and women—"the thieves, the hustlers, the dealers, the racketeers, the killers"—trying to make room for a little goodness in their lives without endangering those they love. Like Dennis Lehane's Joe Coughlin trilogy, also about a New England gangster looking for but failing to find a separate peace, the Danny Ryan saga draws great power from its consummate portrait of a man whose unshakable humanity imperils him just as it offers the possibility of salvation. —*Bill Ott*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Aided by Winslow's social-media presence, *City of Dreams* will join *City on Fire* atop most best-seller lists.

The Dead Will Rise.

By Chris Nickson.

Mar. 2023. 240p. Severn, $30.99 (9781448310197); e-book (9781448310203).

Nickson's latest historical thriller in his popular Simon Westow series is set in Leeds, England, in 1824. Thief-taker Westow and his trusted accomplice, Jane, find themselves tangling with a gang of body snatchers who are digging up new graves and stealing the bodies, selling them for significant profits to doctors and academies doing anatomical research. When Simon learns that the grave robbers' latest victim is about the same age as his eight-year-old twin sons, he vows to find and destroy the gang. But the men who steal the bodies are ruthless and frustratingly elusive. When one of the gang members throws Jane off a bridge and badly injures her as a warning to her and Simon to back off, the violent act only renews the pair's determination to vanquish the gang and unmask the paymaster who's behind the scheme. Nickson's richly authentic descriptions of life in nineteenth-century Britain combine with a grisly plot and characters who jump off the page. —*Emily Melton*

Fallen Angel.

By Marty Holland.

Mar. 2023. 174p. Stark House, paper, $15.95 (9798886010190).

Film noir fans will adore this new series, which showcases the novels on which classic noirs were based. This second in the series is noteworthy as much for its backstory as for the novel itself. Marty Holland was a script typist in Hollywood when she decided to try her hand at writing; *Fallen Angel* (1945) was her first novel, and it was grabbed that same year by Otto Preminger, who envisioned it as a follow-up to *Laura*. After her fast start, Holland drifted into obscurity, writing only three more novels before dying of cancer in 1971. This story, about a small-time grifter who lands in a central California town and hooks up with a femme fatale, is straight out of the James M. Cain playbook. Eric Stanton falls hard for waitress Stella and conspires with her to bilk a spinster out of her inheritance. But the spinster is neither old nor dumb, and soon enough the grifter is losing his bearings. The ending is a bit schmaltzy, but everything leading up to it is on the mark. Check out the film, too, starring Dana Andrews and Linda Darnell. —*Bill Ott*

A Fashionable Fatality.

By Alyssa Maxwell.

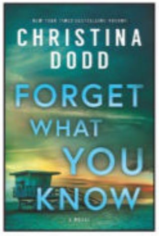
Feb. 2023. 304p. Kensington, $26 (9781496734914); e-book (9781496734945).

Lady Phoebe Renshaw and her maid, Eva, are visiting Atherton Place, the home of Phoebe's sister, Julia, when Coco Chanel and her entourage arrive, planning to photograph the designer's new collection on site. The group and their constant infighting are disruptive, to say the least, and when Suzette, one of the models who has fallen out of favor, dies of smoke inhalation, there is no shortage of theories. While Julia insists the footman is at fault for failing to open the flue, Phoebe believes Suzette was murdered. Phoebe and Eva begin questioning suspects—Phoebe above stairs, Eva below—and comparing notes. Unfortunately, everyone seems to be hiding something, but the two amateur sleuths persevere, leading to grave danger before the culprit is unmasked. Phoebe is a courageous, forward-thinking young woman in the 1920s, who insists her boyfriend respect her autonomy. Superbly framed by the life and times of the period, from both Phoebe's and Eva's points of view, this delightful historical cozy seamlessly weaves the details of couture fashion into the story. —*Sue O'Brien*

Forget What You Know.

By Christina Dodd.

Mar. 2023. 384p. Canary Street, paper, $18.99 (9781335624000); e-book (9780369720122).

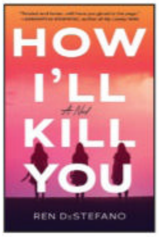


Flower propagator Zoey Phoenix may have irrevocably shattered his heart when she divorced him two years ago, but that doesn't mean Luca Damezas wants to kill Zoey now. But someone wants Zoey permanently out of the picture, which leaves Luca no choice but to agree to serve as her bodyguard while she recuperates from a nearly fatal car accident. Further evidence of pending danger presents itself when the two arrive in the remote Pacific Coast village of Gothic and discover someone has tossed Zoey's home and workplace. Could a clue to what the killer is looking for be buried somewhere in Zoey's shadowy memories of her past? Or would it be safer for Zoey if she simply forgets whatever it is she might know? Dodd (*Point Last Seen*, 2022) deftly loads up the extraordinarily entertaining plot of her latest thrilling and chilling entry in her Gothic-set novels, making it all work with a cinematic flair that Hitchcock would envy, an inventively imaginative cast of characters that includes a former professional wrestler, and a sense of wit so dry it would be perfectly at home in Death Valley. —*John Charles*

How I'll Kill You.

By Ren DeStefano.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Berkley, $27 (9780593438305); e-book (9780593438329).



Triplets Sissy, Moody, and Iris longed for each other as children separated in the foster-care system. Reunited as adults, they're traveling the country, hunting for their darkly warped version of love. In turns, they choose a mark, cultivate love, and then kill him as a demonstration of their devotion to each other over anyone else. Hyperobservant Sissy, the expert in crime-scene clean-up, is a virgin to love and murder, and now it's her turn to enter their blood pact. Sissy's mark is Edison, an earnest young widower who quickly complicates things by igniting comforting, confusing feelings. Next door, Sissy finds a convenient pawn in Dara, but once she's drawn her in, genuine affection and temptation to help Dara escape domestic violence threaten the sisters' plans. Sissy begins to dread choosing between Edison and her sisters, wielding calculated manipulation to prevent her sisters' suspicions from spiraling into destruction. This deceptive thriller opens as a chilling, dispassionate chronicle of murderous triplets devoted to their chosen craft and each other, but it evolves into a twisted love story as layers of loneliness, self-sacrifice, and competing loyalties surface. Readers will find that this sneakily heart-wrenching story lingers with them after Sissy's final words. An outstanding addition to the recent trend in psychological thrillers featuring female predators. —*Christine Tran*

Lost in Paris.

By Betty Webb.

Apr. 2023. Poisoned Pen, paper, $16.99 (9781728269900).

Webb dramatically changes direction here, moving from her contemporary series starring Scottsdale PI Lena Jones to Lost Generation Paris. In 1922, Zoe Barlow, former Alabama debutante, is in the City of Light nursing psychic scars—love affair gone wrong, parents giving her the boot—while trying to paint and supporting herself with a modest stipend from home and her substantial poker winnings. One of her best pals—and she knows everybody who ever put pen to paper or brush to canvas on the Left Bank—is Hadley Hemingway, so naturally Zoe shares her friend's pain when Hadley loses a valise containing all of Ernest's writings. This infamous event in literary history becomes the novel's MacGuffin, as Zoe careens about searching for the manuscripts but finding dead bodies instead. Naturally, her snooping quickly makes her a person of interest to the killer. The plot is really just an excuse for Zoe to bump into still more notables, from Man Ray to Mary Cassatt, but it's perfectly frothy fun, supported by a wealth of tasty historical tidbits, like the Trousers March protesting the French ban against women wearing pants. *—Bill Ott*

A Mansion for Murder.

By Frances Brody.

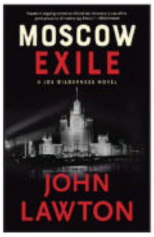
Mar. 2023. 320p. Crooked Lane, $26.99 (9781643857602); e-book (9781643857619).

Investigator Kate Shackleton, widowed in the Great War, is intrigued when she receives a letter from Ronnie Creswell asking to meet. She travels to his mill-town home in Yorkshire, but when she arrives, she finds that Ronnie is dead, apparently having drowned. She and her team, former police officer Jim Sykes and her housekeeper, Mrs. Sugden, are soon hired by the mill owner to investigate a case of industrial espionage and to ready a supposedly cursed mansion for sale. While there, Kate also looks into Ronnie's murder, hoping to clear someone she believes is wrongly accused. Then a second murder occurs, and Ronnie's young sister disappears. Framed by a carefully described English mill-town setting, this historical mystery, the latest in Brody's Kate Shackleton series (following *Murder on a Summer's Day,* 2017), combines an easy-to-like cast with a thoroughly entertaining, twist-filled plot and vivid details of the wool industry of the 1930s. *—Sue O'Brien*

Moscow Exile.

By John Lawton.

Apr. 2023. 448p. Atlantic Monthly, $28 (9780802158024); e-book (9780802158048).



Lawton brings the band back together for another virtuoso performance in what continues to be an espionage series of uncommon depth and breadth. London copper turned diplomat Frederick Troy and the protean figure of Joe Wilderness—cat burglar, black marketeer, unconventional spy—share the stage here, along with other regular players in the company, but it is two new characters who steal the show. Charlie Leigh-Hunt is at the center; he's not a spy out of commitment to a cause, just an amiable sort of crook always looking to work "some sort of fiddle," and if that fiddle turns out to be toiling as a "B-side" double agent in the age of the A-list traitors—Kim Philby, Guy Burgess, et al.—so be it. That's before Charlie is transferred to Washington ("caught in the slipstream of the shitstorm that was Burgess") and runs into a society hostess called Coky, who also has a double life and who complicates Charlie's fiddle no end. Lawton jumps back and forth between WWII and the late 1960s, tracking the machinations of Charlie, Coky, Troy, and Wilderness (languishing in a KGB prison after a "bridge of spies" exchange gone wrong). Familiarity with the previous cavortings of this bent band of brothers and sisters certainly helps but isn't necessary; Lawton infuses the entire troupe with sparkling life, using crackling dialogue and rapier wit to bring a Technicolor sheen to the moral ambiguity of the Cold War. *—Bill Ott*

Murder in Haxford.

By Rick Bleiweiss.

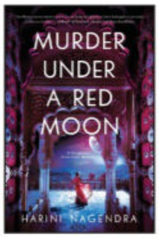
Feb. 2023. 350p. Blackstone, $26.99 (9781665046718).

The detective is named Pignon Scorbion. Where that moniker came from, and how to pronounce it, author Bleiweiss sayeth naught. This is the second novel in his series of parody/pastiches of Golden Age detective stories. It's 1910 in an English village marinating in quaintness, and the crime is suitably odd: a balloonist takes an arrow through the heart, and the details don't add up. Enter Chief Inspector Scorbion, an amalgam of Holmes, Poirot, and maybe Philo Vance. But Bleiweiss layers the eccentricities on with a trowel: surely none of these old sleuthing gods would say he plans to "utilize the telephone to ring him up," or speak of someone's "distinctly bespoke footwear." This affectation is sanded down in the second half of the book, which introduces a fresh corpse—a landscape artist and maybe forger who augments his income with loan sharking. The cast is suitably quirky but manageable in size, making it easier for Scorbion to gather the unusual suspects at the end and unleash a few detective lightning bolts. Never mind Scorbion's saddle shoes and blue-lensed glasses, this one is great fun. *—Don Crinklaw*

Murder under a Red Moon.

By Harini Nagendra.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Pegasus, $26.95 (9781639363704); e-book (9781639363735).



Here's an amateur detective to cheer for: Kaveri Murthy, 19 and newly married, an Indian woman living in India in the early twentieth century under the restrictive rule of the British Raj and the rigid expectations of her own social class, manages to surmount these obstacles to solve crimes. The real feat here is that Murthy's sleuthing is both excruciatingly exciting and entirely believable. This, the second in the Bangalore Detectives mystery series, is set in 1921, and starts with Kaveri's mother-in-law taking Kaveri to meet a famous swami to receive his blessing, designed to aid her in bearing many sons (not in Kaveri's plan). The mother-in-law also insists that Kaveri meet with her cousin, the wife of a wealthy woolen-mill owner who suspects someone in the family is embezzling from his factory. The plan is to have Kaveri, who studies mathematics, inspect the books on the night of the blood moon eclipse, bad omen, when everyone except evildoers stays inside. Kaveri discovers a body and her own locket clutched in the corpse's hand. Kaveri now confronts both a murder and an attempt to frame her. Kaveri's Detectives Club, brilliantly composed of women from all levels of society, from policeman's wife to prostitute, fans out to help Kaveri solve a murder that threatens her own life. Splendid. *—Connie Fletcher*

Murder Visits a French Village.

By Susan C. Shea.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Severn, $30.99 (9781448310180); e-book (9781448310258).

Recently widowed, Ariel Shepard travels to France, where she inherited a chateau in Burgundy that her late husband had purchased and planned to restore for her. Ariel finds the chateau needs plenty of work, but she is determined to transform it into an inn. While she navigates the unfamiliar world of construction in France, a new friend, fellow expat Katherine, introduces her to scholar Christiane Breton, who offers to research the history of the chateau. Christiane is bothered by something she learns, but before she can tell Ariel what it is, she is murdered. Soon one of the workmen is a suspect in the killing, and someone attempts to steal Ariel's laptop. Egged on by Katherine and her friend Pippa (who have solved other cases in Shea's French Village Mysteries series), the three investigate, ultimately unraveling clues on the way to a solution. Ariel is a sympathetic amateur sleuth, starting a new life in a new country in her thirties, and the mystery is nicely framed by a view of expat life in France and the details of restoring a chateau. *—Sue O'Brien*

One Extra Corpse.

By Barbara Hambly.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Severn, $30.99 (9780727850799); e-book (9781448310234).

BARBARA HAMBLY
ONE EXTRA
CORPSE

In this sequel to the excellent *Scandal in Babylon* (2021), it's been several months since the recently widowed Emma Blackstone came to Hollywood from Britain and promptly extricated her new employer, the famous movie star Kitty Flint, from a murder charge. Now, in May 1924, Emma feels like her new life in Tinseltown might finally be calming down. Until film director Ernst Zapolya, who happens to be one of Kitty's (many) former lovers, says he has a problem only Kitty can solve. And Kitty can't possibly do anything without Emma's help. Hambly, who's known primarily for a series of novels featuring the nineteenth-century sleuth

Benjamin January (although she's published in multiple genres), knocks this second in her Silver Screen series out of the park. Everything feels just right: the characters are abundantly human, the mystery is beautifully constructed, and the Hollywood milieu is vividly realized. Readers who enjoyed the first Emma Blackstone novel will like this one every bit as much, if not more. Recommend the series to fans of Ed Ifkovic's series starring writer Edna Ferber. —*David Pitt*

The Red Widow Murders.

By John Dickson Carr.

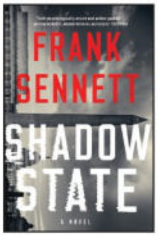
Feb. 2023. 288p. Penzler/American Mystery Classics, $25.95 (9781613163900); paper, $15.95 (9781613163955).

The prolific Carr, writing as Carter Dickson, penned the extensive Sir Henry Merrivale (H. M.) series between 1934 and 1953. He stands out among the Golden Age crime writers for his perfection of the locked-room mystery. Carr's talent is on full display in this entry in Otto Penzler's American Mystery Classics, which includes an outstanding introduction in which Tom Mead praises Carr's "effortlessly readable prose" and his Poe-like tendency to revel in the macabre. A man is found poisoned in a locked room, a haunted room, "a room that kills," the Red Widow's Chamber, which was sealed up following four unholy events there in the nineteenth century. It is now the 1930s. The victim was part of a group of eight oddly assorted people, including H. M., who had gathered downstairs, drawing cards until whoever pulled the ace of spades was required to spend the night in the accursed room. And now that person is dead. H. M. rumbles and grumbles his way through to a solution once again. A classic, indeed. —*Jane Murphy*

★ Shadow State.

By Frank Sennett.

Feb. 2023. 288p. Crooked Lane, $28.99 (9781639102402); e-book (9781639102419).



Rafe Hendrix, formerly of the U.S. Army Rangers, was in charge of the Secret Service detail responsible for protecting the president. Violating a direct order, he saved an important life, but others were lost in the resulting carnage. When the political dust clears, Rafe is left without a job. Uprooting himself and moving to Texas, he finds a sense of peace, a home, and a new relationship—all of which could come crashing down around him when his past and his present collide. Sennett wrote two entertaining hard-boiled mysteries in the early 2000s starring journalist Nash Hansen (*Nash, Metropolitan,* 2004) before turning to nonfiction (*Groupon's Biggest Deal Ever*, 2012). His return to crime fiction should be welcomed by all fans of the genre: Sennett has some serious storytelling talent. The writing is rich and nuanced, and the characters are lovingly crafted. No stereotypes here; no standard-issue good guys and bad guys. No familiar plot points, either: Sennett will appear to take the story down a familiar road, but then he'll make an unexpected turn. In an afterword, he says, "Rafe Hendrix will return." That's good news, indeed, though political-thriller writers like Mark Greaney and Gregg Hurwitz might be wise to watch their backs. —*David Pitt*

Standing Dead.

By Margaret Mizushima.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Crooked Lane, $28.99 (9781639102440); e-book (9781639102457).

Timber Creek, Colorado, K-9 cop Mattie Cobb's eighth adventure (after *Striking Range,* 2021) sharply contrasts her settled life with her fiancé, veterinarian Cole Walker, and her tight-knit colleagues at the sheriff's department with her childhood's resurfacing dangers. Mattie's family has been threatened since her father, a Border Patrol agent, was murdered nearly three decades ago by the drug-running Cobb brothers. Mattie believes that the brothers' recent deaths have eliminated the danger, until she discovers that her mother and stepfather are missing. Mattie's nightmare continues when she's lured to a remote campground where she finds her stepfather's body and a note identifying her as the ultimate target. Guarded by her team, Mattie investigates the murders while Cole treats a pair of horses suspiciously poisoned from a trough near the stepfather's body. The horses' owner arouses Mattie's suspicion, as do a group of out-of-town hunters and a prickly local herbalist. Infused with warmth, this suspenseful quasi-cozy's greatest appeal lies in Mattie's work with her K-9 partner, Robo, and Cole's detailed narrative of veterinary procedures. —*Christine Tran*

Unnatural History.

By Jonathan Kellerman.

Feb. 2023. 320p. Ballantine, $28.99 (9780525618614); e-book (9780525618621).

A noted (but not universally liked) photographer is murdered. Did someone connected with his recent project bear him a grudge? Or is there a secret buried deep in the history of the victim's rather eccentric family? Forensic psychologist Alex Delaware and LAPD detective Milo Sturgis soon learn that there won't be any easy answers, as the mystery only deepens the more they dig into the victim's life. In addition, the photographer's latest project—images of homeless people in costumes reflecting their fantasies—has prompted considerable controversy. Kellerman introduced Delaware and Sturgis in 1985's Edgar-winning *When the Bough Breaks,* and their long-running partnership—this is the thirty-eighth installment—has produced a series of strong crime novels. Kellerman, a psychologist himself, displays a deep awareness of what goes on inside the human mind; his stories are complex, and his characters are vividly drawn. Series fans will be eager to read this one. —*David Pitt*

Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers.

By Jesse Q. Sutanto.

Mar. 2023. Berkley, $27 (9780593546178); paper, $16.99 (9780593549223).

Death shouldn't be funny or sweet or heartwarming, except maybe in a new cozy series starring Vera Wong, the widowed owner of San Francisco Chinatown's rather decrepit Vera Wang's World-Famous Teahouse. That titular typo is actually intentional, meant to suggest "a very famous person, even white people know her name." At 60, Vera's settled into specific routines: up at 4:30 am ("late mornings are only for toddlers and Europeans"), wash, walk, text her silent son, home, cold shower, breakfast, open shop downstairs, wait for (her *very* few) customers. Disruption arrives one morning when she discovers a corpse on the floor. The police arrive, refuse her amazing tea, barely investigate, and leave. Vera knows she's looking at foul play, no matter what the authorities insist. Of course, she'll solve the case by gathering (and feeding) the most likely suspects—an alleged reporter, a supposed podcaster, the dead man's wife, and his twin brother. Vera's next deadly installment hasn't yet been officially announced, but the success of Sutanto's best-selling Aunties series certainly points to more tales of murder. —*Terry Hong*

We Love to Entertain.

By Sarah Strohmeyer.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Harper, paper, $18.99 (9780063224384); e-book (9780063224391).

Erika Turnbull was a normal teen living in a small Vermont town until a tragic accident ruined her reputation and turned her life upside down. She lost her self-confidence and could find only dead-end jobs. So when she's hired as executive assistant to Robert and Holly Barron, contestants on the popular TV reality show *To the Manor Build,* she's thrilled. The show pits contestants against each other as they rehab a property, with the winner selected by the viewing public. Millennials Holly and Robert are transforming a property they bought for a song when the owner defaulted on his taxes, and are building an eco-friendly yet luxurious mega-mansion. But when Robert and Holly disappear, and two mysterious deaths occur, Erika becomes a prime suspect when the trail of clues leads straight to her. The conclusion is as shocking as it is scandalous, but after all the trauma and suspense, it's unexpectedly satisfying. Strohmeyer offers an original plot that keeps us guessing and entertaining writing that veers from dark humor, usually with tongue in cheek, to tragedy. —*Emily Melton*

What Have We Done.

By Alex Finlay.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Minotaur, $27.99 (9781250863720); e-book (9781250863737).

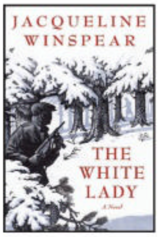
Savior House was meant to be a place of refuge for orphaned children. Instead, it became a house of horrors, especially for friends

Benny, Jenna, Donnie, Nico, and Arthur. Desperation leads the group to a violent act, which in turn closes the house and causes them to separate. Twenty-five years later and still struggling with the trauma of their childhood, they are unexpectedly reunited when an unknown person attempts to kill them, one by one. Discovering who wants them dead forces the former friends to confront their past and understand what really happened when they were kids. This multi-narrative story hooks you right away, even though some suspension of disbelief may be required as the plot unfolds. While Finlay doesn't break any new ground here, and some of his characters drift toward cliché, his gripping tale delivers both heart-pounding action and plenty of twists to keep the reader guessing. A thoroughly entertaining "popcorn thriller"—just right for fans of Riley Sager's *Final Girls* (2017) and Stacy Willingham's *A Flicker in the Dark* (2022). —*Stephanie Howes*

The White Lady.

By Jacqueline Winspear.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Harper, $28.99 (9780062867988); e-book (9780062868008).



After taking her readers from 1910 to 1942 in her Maisie Dobbs novels, Winspear moves forward a bit in time to 1947 and introduces another extraordinary female protagonist, Elinor White. Elinor has been identified by different names in her lifetime, including her birth name Elinor De Witt, La Dame Blanche, and Linni, as she is known to family and friends. By any name, she has always had reason to believe that "fate was sprinting toward her." Now retired in rural Kent on His Majesty's "grace and favour," after serving bravely in two world wars, Elinor is living quietly, albeit dealing with her personal demons. But when a local family is threatened, she finds herself embroiled in a new kind of battle against a dangerous crime gang with corrupt ties not only to Scotland Yard but also to the highest levels of government. No one suspects that a practiced killer is behind the threats, and even readers will be surprised by the determination and skill Elinor summons when again called upon by fate. The real strength of the novel, however, lies in the poignant and beautifully written backstory of Elinor's childhood in war-torn Belgium and her personal losses in a devastated London. Winspear is an absolute master of the character-driven thriller, and although fans will wish for more of Elinor, they will reluctantly agree that she has earned some peace. —*Jane Murphy*

Who Cries for the Lost.

By C. S. Harris.

Apr. 2023. 352p. Berkley, $27 (9780593102725); e-book (9780593197042).

A mutilated body in the Thames is identified as aristocrat Miles Sedgewick, and Sebastian St. Cyr is compelled to take the case. Sedgewick was not a nice man, and he left a trail of clues to possible motives behind him, including his fascination with werewolves and witchcraft. When another, somewhat similarly mutilated body washes ashore, Sebastian must determine if he is dealing with an occult-obsessed serial killer or if the killings have more to do with events earlier in the Napoleonic Wars, which becomes more likely when it is discovered that a list of French spies has gone missing. Meanwhile, Napoleon is on the move toward Waterloo. As usual, Sebastian's wife, Hero, provides able assistance in the investigation, and together they move adroitly between the poverty-stricken streets of London and the powers behind the literal throne. St. Cyr fans will relish Harris' commitment to historical accuracy in both political and physical details, and the unexpected twist of an ending resonates with earlier books in the series, including *When Blood Lies* (2022). This is top-notch historical crime storytelling. —*Susan Maguire*

The Writing Retreat.

By Julia Bartz.

Feb. 2023. 320p. Atria/Emily Bestler, $27 (9781982199456); e-book (9781982199470).

Thirty-year-old Alex dreams of being a writer. Stuck in a job she hates, Alex jumps at the chance to take part in a writing retreat held at the reclusive Blackbriar estate, home to horror author and feminist icon Roza Vallo. Even the appearance of her former best friend, Wren, doesn't take away from Alex's excitement. However, once the retreat begins, Roza throws the attendees quite a curve—they must each complete a novel from scratch, and the writer who produces the best work will get a million-dollar publishing deal. Alex and the other attendees immediately immerse themselves in the challenge, while attempting to ignore the odd happenings that begin to take place at Blackbriar. But when one of the writers disappears, Alex and the others realize there is something nefarious going on. Bartz's debut is stomach-clenchingly thrilling from beginning to end. Blackbriar and its vivid inhabitants are brought to life by Bartz with consummate skill. Alex is beautifully flawed; readers will connect with her in multiple ways. The plot is psychologically jarring and fast paced, with several surprises that will excite even the most well-read mystery aficionado. Highly recommended for fans of authors like Ruth Ware and Riley Sager whose psychological suspense fiction typically features intelligent female leads. —*Carmen Clark*

You Never Know.

By Connie Briscoe.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Amistad, $27.99 (9780063246584); e-book (9780063246607).

Briscoe, who has been writing historical fiction and romance for nearly three decades, makes her first foray into domestic suspense. Protagonist Alexis is a hearing-impaired woman of color in her late thirties, attractive and successful in her career. She decides to end her relationship with her obsessive boyfriend, Paul, after she meets Marcus, a handsome attorney. Their whirlwind romance is spontaneous and a refreshing change. When Marcus proposes after just six months, Alexis agrees to a hastily assembled wedding despite her parents' concern that she has hardly had a chance to get to know him. Turns out they were right. Marcus turns "reckless, even dangerous." The dangerous part is not just his professional dealings, but the fact that his first wife, Charlene, is missing and suspected dead. Alexis is left wondering what to do when Marcus disappears, and she nearly drowns fleeing an intruder who breaks in one night and attempts to assault her. More drama than suspense, but Briscoe's fans will still find much to enjoy. —*Jane Murphy*

Historical Fiction

Beyond That, the Sea.

By Laura Spence-Ash.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Macmillan/Celadon, $28 (9781250854377); e-book, $14.99 (9781250854384).

At the end of summer in 1940, Millie and Reg made the tough choice to send 11-year-old Beatrix to a family in the U.S. as Germany intensified its attacks on England. Nancy and Ethan Gregory, along with 13-year-old William and nine-year-old Gerald, welcome Bea at Boston Harbor, and nothing will ever be the same again. With every new experience Bea shares with the Gregorys, what part of her previous life does she need to let go of? With lively characters that continue to grow and change over four decades, each providing their own unique perspective on historical events, Spence-Ash explores complex family dynamics without villains. Readers will feel the pull of new fictional friends from the first to the last page, and long afterward. Details of daily life build a strong sense of time and place in both countries and time frames further deepening this outstanding debut novelist's portrayal of her characters. Spence-Ash's first novel will appeal to fans of Pam Jenoff, Margot Livesey, and Ann Packer. —*Stacey Hayman*

The Dance Tree.

By Kiran Millwood Hargrave.

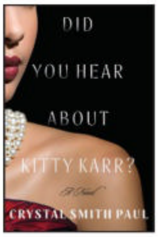
Mar. 2023. 256p. HarperVia, $27.99 (9780063274778); e-book, $14.99 (9780063274792).

In 1518, Strasbourg seems punished by God as it is plagued by famine, drought, and suffocating heat. Then, a mania: in the town square, women begin to dance until they collapse, their numbers soon swelling. Heavily pregnant Lisbet has her own troubles. A dozen miscarriages robbed her of hope, and her husband's distance increases with her desperation. Her sister-in-law, Agnethe, returns after years of penance for a mysterious transgression. Lisbet's friend Ida knows Agnethe's "secret," and Ida's husband, a vicious representative of the local council, threatens all. Through visceral but expressive prose, Hargrave (*The Mercies*, 2020) intersperses Lisbet, Ida, and Agnethe's story with brief backstories for the dancing women. Though the historic dancing plague involved both sexes, Hargrave creates a female-only phenomenon. She explores themes of female subjugation—"where every priest preaches their damnation, where their husbands drag them by the hair and they must drown their children"—along with a secondary focus on sexual and racial persecution. This feminist tale features strong female characterization against the interesting backdrop of a mania the cause of which is still debated 500 years later. —*Bethany Latham*

Did You Hear about Kitty Karr?

By Crystal Smith Paul.

May 2023. 416p. Holt, $27.99 (9781250815309); e-book (9781250815316).



After years of living a reclusive life, iconic actress Kitty Karr dies, leaving her estate to the St. John sisters, the daughters of her former sitcom costar. As it turns out, the connection between the two families runs deep, back to Jim Crow–era North Carolina. Growing up, biracial Mary Magdalene is encouraged to experiment with passing for white. When Mary graduates from high school, her mother gives her a one-way ticket to Los Angeles and a new life as a white woman. Mary—renamed Kitty Karr—secures a job at a movie studio, and her talent and intelligence catapult her career. Kitty learns that there's a community of women in Hollywood who are not only passing but using their newfound white privilege to support Black Americans. But passing for white is fraught with danger during an era of segregation, and Kitty is forced to give up her beloved daughter, who is born with dark skin. While the story spans two time periods, Kitty is the star throughout the book. Paul's debut is a riveting, often heartbreaking tale that explores race, privilege, and celebrity in America through the eyes of a one-of-a-kind character. Readers of Taylor Jenkins Reid and Piper Huguley will be enthralled. —*Nanette Donohue*

Go as a River.

By Shelley Read.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Spiegel & Grau, $28 (9781954118232); e-book (9781954118249).

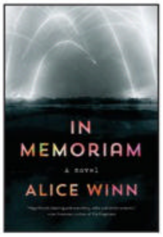
In this lyrical debut novel, a "small fateful twist" overtakes an isolated young woman seeking the courage and resilience to keep flowing forward, as a river, against all obstacles, in post-WWII Colorado. Victoria's horizons are circumscribed by caring for the family's prized orchard and her troubled father, uncle, and volatile brother. An accident years ago took her mother, leaving Victoria ignorant of love and sexuality until a chance meeting with a gentle, enigmatic drifter. Fearing the consequences, she heads to the mountains, where, bolstered by nature and the surety of Wil's love, she battles to keep "doing the next right thing" to save herself and the things she treasures. Read, a fifth-generation Coloradan, draws characters and settings with period authenticity, stunning imagery, and deft metaphors—a mountain peak, for example, "glow[s] as soft as hand-churned butter"; a storm-eroded riverbank evokes fate. Forward to 1971, where Victoria "pace[s] the shoreline" of the reservoir beneath which lie the ruins of her childhood, anxiously awaiting a reckoning with the hardest choice she ever made. —*Anne Foley*

YA: *YAs may relate to the message of finding courage within oneself and the author's compassionate portrayal of a 17-year-old persevering in the face of trauma. AF.*

In Memoriam.

By Alice Winn.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Knopf, $28 (9780593534564).



When Gaunt and Ellwood met as young men at Preshute, their prestigious English boarding school, Ellwood's sparkle and Jewishness had already distinguished him as a charming sort of other, while Gaunt was an enigma to his peers outside and inside the boxing ring he dominated. At the dawning of the Great War, Ellwood, a faithful memorizer of Tennyson, loves his country and waits anxiously to be old enough to enlist. Gaunt, however, a devout student of Thucydides, sees the futility of war and thinks of his German cousins on the other side. Thanks to close third-person narration, readers know what's between these two young men all along, but it will take trench warfare for them to truly discover it. Winn's finely accomplished debut novel is a rare thing, an intoxicating romance and an impossible-to-put-down war story in one, and to say much about its climactic turns would be saying too much. A generation of boys fears the war will end too soon and then, pummeled by senseless inhumanity and loss, runs out of things to fear. Winn captures the war as it looked, sounded, and smelled, but the ultimate death-defying acts here are in literature, and the most breathtaking bravery in love. —*Annie Bostrom*

YA: *Teen readers may be drawn to Winn's authentic reimagining of the brutal war and her heroes' teenage experiences of it. AB.*

The Last Russian Doll.

By Kristen Loesch.

Mar. 2023. 416p. Berkley, $27 (9780593547984); e-book (9780593548004).

When Oxford graduate student Rosie White becomes a research assistant to famed Russian dissident Alexey Ivanov, her motives are not just scholarly. As a child, Raisa, as she was then known, and her mother fled Russia after the murders of her father and sister. When she's not helping Ivanov search for a mysterious woman known only as Kukolka, or little doll, Rosie hopes to learn the full story behind her own family tragedy. Armed with a book of Russian fairy tales and a key to a locked drawer, deathbed gifts from her troubled mother, Rosie soon discovers that her two research projects intersect in some surprising and sinister ways. Spanning Russian history, from the 1917 Russian Revolution to the fall of the Soviet Union, Loesch's ambitious debut novel intertwines Rosie's present-day narrative with those of Tonya, a newly married noblewoman, and Valentin, a young revolutionary. Loesch's knowledgeable and detailed depictions of the Siege of Leningrad and Soviet labor camps and extensive cast of characters can be a bit challenging, but ultimately, all comes together in this powerfully affecting tale. —*Lindsay Harmon*

Sell Us the Rope.

By Stephen May.

Mar. 2023. 240p. Bloomsbury, paper, $18 (9781639731435).

The fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic and Labour Party is being held in London, of all places. Koba—"you know him as Stalin," the reader is blithely informed—arrives in England with a brace of comrades to represent Georgia at the congress. There he encounters Elli Vuokko, a fresh-faced 19-year-old doing her revolutionary bit for the lathe operators of Finland. The Okhrana (Tsarist secret police) threaten, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks squabble, and Ulyanov and Yanovsky (Lenin and Trotsky) appoint Koba to ferret out party traitors. Despite the 1907 setting, May's London feels Dickensian with its urchins and pervasive filth, a setting competently evoked through impressionistic sentence fragments ("Smuts in their eyes"). Koba takes advantage of the vulnerable (Elli and an abused child) with boundless anger, employing mantras like "no better time to kick a man than when he's down." This inventive literary work takes an interesting look at an interesting historical time through interesting characterization while daringly taking a darkly comedic approach to an historical monster responsible for the deaths of millions. —*Bethany Latham*

The Trackers.

By Charles Frazier.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Ecco, $30 (9780062948083); e-book (9780062948106).

Following *Varina* (2018), Frazier is in top form for his fifth novel, which traverses America in its portrait of contrasting Depression-era lives. "The Trackers" is the name that

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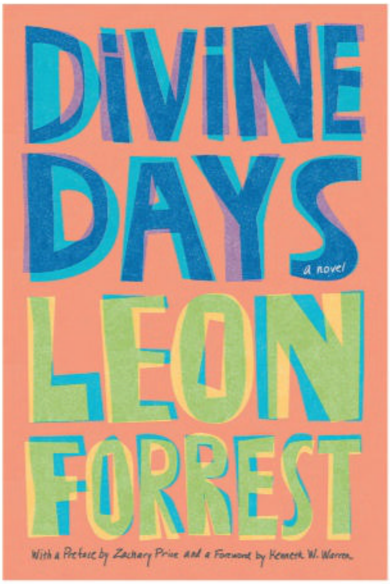
Another Look at DIVINE DAYS LEON FORREST

by Donna Seaman

Chicago writer Leon Forrest's big, polyphonic, exuberantly imaginative, rambunctious, philosophical, funny, and righteous fourth novel, *Divine Days*, was originally published in 1992 by a small local outfit, Another Chicago Press, to avid acclaim, including a starred review in *Booklist*. The paperback W. W. Norton issued three years later, following the destruction of much of the hardcover run in a warehouse fire, has been out of print for many years. Now Seminary Co-op Offsets, a new imprint at Northwestern University Press, delivers a well-designed definitive edition to twenty-first-century readers.

Forrest's reverberating tour de force, an impassioned inquiry into faith, longing, identity, community, racism, and survival, takes place over seven days in the life of aspiring playwright Joubert Antoine Jones, a chaotic, heart-wrenching, and mind-blowing week in February 1966 set in motion by his return home to an unnamed city in fictional Forest County ("a hustler's paradise") that closely, mischievously, and lovingly resembles Chicago's South Side. Joubert, 29, has just completed a two-year stint in the army in Germany. He's back with his Aunt Eloise, who is also his stepmother, a powerhouse who writes a gossip column for the *Forest County Dispatch,* runs Eloise's Night Light Lounge, and unwinds with Möet champagne. Her popular neighborhood bar occupies the haunted former home of a rogue storefront church, Divine Days, overseen by W. A. D. Ford, an "underground madman of miraculous divination, so soused in evil intent." Joubert closely studied Ford and attempted to portray him in a long and ambitious play titled *Divine Days*. Joubert now hopes to carve out time from his hours working at the Night Light Lounge to write a new play about another mysteriously charismatic man, the elusive, magnetic, and legendary trickster and "sweet shark" known as Sugar-Groove.


DIVINE
DAYS
a novel
LEON
FORREST
With a Preface by Zachary Price and a Foreword by Kenneth W. Warren

Encouraged to keep a journal by his Aunt Eloise, who is trying to steer him to a more practical career as a journalist, Joubert pens a veritable torrent-of-consciousness roiling with fanatically precise descriptions, wild soliloquies, ribald banter, heated confrontations, and deep reaches into the past. His drive to write is propelled in great part by the voices that assail him: "I've been hearing voices all of my life. . . . Sometimes these incantations overtake me, speaking not only to me but through me and rendering me up frazzled and daffy." Joubert also channels and riffs on Greek myths, the bible, Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Joyce, Faulkner, spirituals, blues, and jazz, all while portraying a tangle of Black, white, and Creole men, women, and children rooted in the South and transplanted to the North.

Forrest's first three Forest County novels—*There Is a Tree More Ancient Than Eden* (1973), *The Bloodworth Orphans* (1977), and *Two Wings to Veil My Face* (1983)—were edited by Toni Morrison. In his Foreword to Forrest's debut, Ralph Ellison wrote, "*What a tortured, history-wracked, anguished, Hound-of-Heaven-pursued, Ham-and-Oedipus-cursed, Blake-visioned, apocalypse-prone projection of the human predicament!* Yet, simultaneously, I was thinking, *Yes, but how furiously eloquent is this man Forrest's prose, how zestful his jazz-like invention, his parody, his reference to the classics and commonplaces of literature, folklore, tall-tale and slum-street jive!*" The same and so much more can be said about *Divine Days*, the most spectacular title in the Forest County saga.

The "partial" list of characters provided in this invaluable edition runs for five pages and includes barmaids, nurses, cops, preachers, love interests, family members, and the regulars at a barbershop and Eloise's Night Light Lounge. Joubert ponders, at length, the divine and the profane, racism and the abuse of power, denial and reckoning. The result is a dramatic, poignant, ironic, slapstick, virtuoso, excessive, piercing, and profoundly inquisitive tale of ruckus, pratfalls, bamboozlement, showdowns, supernatural mysteries, spiritual ecstasy, despair, unrequited love, and erotic compulsion. Both churches and bars are places of worship, communion, confession, rowdiness, sorrow, joy, rivalry, and transcendence. Joubert's investigations into Ford and Sugar-Groove lead back to horrific accounts of rape, incest, racial violence, and colorism. Forrest also takes careful measure of the civil rights era and the urgent contrast between the activism of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, a divide that tragically derails De Loretto, also known as Imani, the artist and social worker Joubert is besotted with.

Joubert asks, "How do you reveal everything on your mind and all of what happens?" Forrest, who worked as a bartender, served in the army in Germany, edited and wrote for newspapers, and taught at Northwestern University for more than two decades, serving as chair of African American studies, found a way. *Divine Days* is an entrancing, encompassing, and resounding masterwork. And there's more. Forrest, who died too soon at age 60 in 1997, continued Joubert Antoine Jones' story in the posthumously published *Meteor in the Madhouse*.

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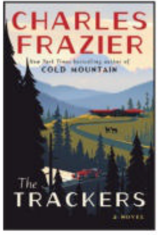


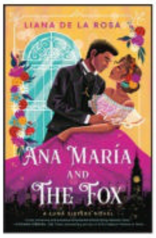
New Deal artist Valentine “Val” Welch gives the mural he’s commissioned to paint in the post office of Dawes, Wyoming. He aims to inspire small-town pride by showcasing regional highlights. While lodging at the expansive ranch of aspiring politician John Long and his younger wife, Eve, Val gets pulled into their drama. Not long after a stressful dinner party, Eve takes off with a small Renoir from Long’s collection in hand and doesn’t return. Long asks Val to find her. Events turn more dangerous and puzzling than expected. From an exhausting trip to wild rural Florida to the newly constructed, cinnabar-hued Golden Gate Bridge, the locales feel period-authentic, and the writing hums with spectacular word-images. While Val narrates, using a light folksy style that Frazier’s fans will recognize, the novel’s primary hero is Eve. An inscrutably captivating woman from impoverished origins who became a teenage hobo and sang in cowboy bands, she has reasons for fleeing wealthy married life, and the mystery ignites the plot. The Old West still lingers in this propulsive tale of individualistic characters striving to beat the odds. —*Sarah Johnson*

Romance

Ana María and the Fox.

By Liana De la Rosa.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Berkley, paper, $17 (9780593440889); e-book (9780593440896).

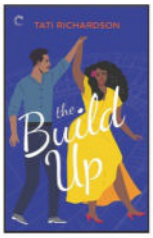


As the eldest daughter in her family, Ana María Luna Valdés always does what is expected of her. So when the French invade and occupy Mexico, Ana María, following her father’s directive, takes her sisters Gabby and Isobel and sets off for the safety of their uncle’s home in London. Once in England, Ana María and her sisters quickly make a splash in society as the wealthy, mysterious, and exotic Luna sisters. However, now that she is away from her father’s daily dictates, Ana María discovers that the ability to make decisions for herself, such as whether to encourage the flirtatious behavior of up-and-coming progressive British politician Gideon Fox, is exhilarating. With this dazzling series starter, De La Rosa cleverly refreshes and then rebrands Victorian-era historical romance by not only gifting readers with a beguiling Mexican heroine but also offering an intriguing view into the vibrant culture of that country. Pair this with a perfectly paced plot spiced with danger and plenty of smoldering sexual chemistry, and you have the brilliant beginning of the bewitching new Luna Sisters romances. —*John Charles*

The Build Up.

By Tati Richardson.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Carina, paper, $8.99 (9781335621931); e-book (9780369735157).



After her architectural career in Chicago is derailed by a workplace romance gone awry, Ari James is now on a man-fast. That means Ari isn’t about to let anything distract her from her new job at Atlanta-based Riddle and Robinson, including Ari’s way-too-fine workplace partner, Porter Harrison, with whom Ari is developing plans for a trend-setting new soccer stadium. However, the more time Ari spends with Porter on the clock at work, the more she begins to wonder what they might be like as a couple when they’re off the clock and away from the office. Richardson’s delightfully entertaining debut brilliantly showcases a deliciously sharp sense of humor that makes the most of the book’s setting while never downplaying the real workplace struggles women in a male-dominated industry face. This appeal is matched by the book’s older, plus-size heroine, who confidently embraces her own self-worth. In all, this is a romance that throws off plenty of sexy chemistry and sensual sizzle in a story line that celebrates family, friends, and food, hitting the romance fiction trifecta. —*John Charles*

A Kiss in the Moonlight.

By Cathy Maxwell.

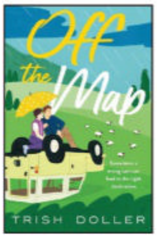
Mar. 2023. 368p. Avon, paper, $9.99 (9780063241176); e-book (9780063241183).

It has been several years since their ne’er-do-well but well-meaning father, Captain Sir John Lanscarr, disappeared. Now, if Gwendolyn, Dara, and Elise don’t do something immediately, their odious cousin Richard will marry them off as quickly as he can. Ever the strategist among her siblings, Dara convinces her sisters to leave their small Irish village and head to London’s marriage mart, where Dara is certain each of them can land a duke for a husband. However, just as Dara’s scheme seems to be gaining momentum, attorney and up-and-coming member of Parliament Michael Brogan begins showing romantic interest in Elise. Since Michael is definitely not a duke, Dara will have to find a way of distracting him, even it means spending time with Michael herself! With its captivating characters, spot-on plotting spiced with a hint of dangerous political intrigue, and simmering sensuality, this is no gamble for historical romance fans who will find that this is a great start to Maxwell’s (*His Lessons on Love*, 2022) new Gambler’s Daughters series —*John Charles*

Off the Map.

By Trish Doller.

Mar. 2023. 272p. St. Martin’s/Griffin, paper, $16.99 (9781250809490).



Raised by her single schoolteacher father, uninhibited Carla has spent a good part of each year traveling the wild parts of the Americas and beyond. When she’s home, she works in a Hooter’s-like, pirate-themed bar. Flying to Ireland to be maid of honor in her best friend’s wedding is a different kind of trip. She expects to be picked up at the airport by the uptight best man, but instead, Eamon arranges to meet her at a bar, and they end up in bed. The next day, driving across Ireland, they take some adventurous detours involving camping and being terrorized by a bull before joining his large family and her friends, characters from Doller’s *The Float Plan* (2021) and *Suite Spot* (2022). Sizzling sex and a sharp focus on the measured building of the relationship between Eamon and Carla, from a cute meet to congenial travel buddies, from deep friendship to love, are paired to perfection, while sensitive territory is explored in Carla’s relationship with her Vietnam veteran dad who has Alzheimer’s. Doller makes complex characters in complicated relationships come to totally convincing life as she makes each novel better than the one before it. —*Diana Tixier Herald*

The Only Game in Town.

By Lacie Waldon.

Mar. 2023. 416p. Putnam, paper, $17 (9780593540800); e-book (9780593540817).

The small town of Redford, Georgia, is a tight-knit community in which everyone knows each other’s name, family, and business. Jessica Reid has lived there all her life, apart from her college years spent in New York, where she cultivated her love of reading and writing. Now living back in her beloved hometown, Jess works as a romance novel editor, living a comfortable small-town life, with her dad just down the street. When a cherished member of the community passes away, leaving his multimillion-dollar fortune in the hands of the two lucky townspeople who win the elaborate, days-long competition he orchestrated, Jess finds herself questioning her devotion to the town and its devotion to her. With Carter Barclay, the grandson of the mastermind behind the games, added to the mix, the romance editor finds herself on a romantic if obstacle-filled journey of her own. Fun, wholesome, and, at times, poignant, Waldon’s third novel, following *From the Jump* (2022), will have readers falling in love with Redford and the diverse group of characters who call it home. —*Sabrina Szos*

The Scandalous Ladies of London: The Countess.

By Sophie Jordan.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Avon, paper, $19.99 (9780063270701); e-book (9780063270718).

Soon after marrying the earl of Chatham, Lady Gertrude “Tru” Chatham discovered her new husband was more interested in her dowry than Tru herself. So, almost 20 years later, when Tru learns her husband is arranging for their daughter, Cordelia, to marry

Jasper Thorne to benefit his own pockets rather than to secure Cordelia's future romantic happiness, Tru decides to take action. After gathering all the societal intel she can find on him, Tru arranges a meeting with Jasper to convince him to set his matrimonial sights elsewhere. However, all this information doesn't prepare Tru for the fact that upon meeting Jasper, she discovers the man who wishes to marry her daughter also happens to be the same stranger who propositioned Tru the night before. For the launch of her latest Regency-set series, Jordan (*The Rake Gets Ravished*, 2022) smartly deploys her skill for creating sensually charged romance and red-hot passion while at the same time giving a cheeky nod to two popular television series that feature housewives, both real and desperate, with her entertainingly sudsy cast of female characters. —*John Charles*

Secretly Yours.

By Tessa Bailey.

Feb. 2023. 384p. Avon, paper, $17.99 (9780063238985); e-book (9780063238992).

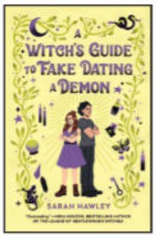
Fifteen years ago, Hallie Welch almost kissed her teenage crush, Julian Vos, in his family's Napa Valley vineyard. It was a moment Hallie never forgot. Julian, however, apparently did. Now back in St. Helena on a professorial sabbatical to work on his first novel, Julian doesn't recognize Hallie one iota. So Hallie does what any self-respecting woman would do after sampling more than her fair share of Napa Valley's finest export, she pens Julian a secret-admirer letter. While Julian might be puzzled by the anonymous love note, what is really bothering him is his reaction to Hallie, who is completely throwing him off his strict writing routine. With her latest addictively readable rom-com, the cheeky humor and full-blown sexiness that are organic elements in all of Bailey's (*Hook, Line, and Sinker*, 2022) writing are in full, glorious bloom. The end result is a lushly sensual romance that brilliantly exploits the opposites-attract trope between a buttoned-up, by-the-book academic and a cheerfully chaotic Earth goddess-gardener for the maximum amount of love and laughter. Watch for the follow-up, *Unfortunately Yours*. —*John Charles*

A Witch's Guide to Fake Dating a Demon.

By Sarah Hawley.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Berkley, paper, $17 (9780593547922).

Mariel has always been told "the wind, earth, and stars" predicted she was going to be the strongest witch in generations of her wealthy family famed for strong magic, a forecast that makes her failure to master magic even more disappointing. Her overbearing mother refuses to fund her sorcery doctorate in magical herbology until she masters teleportation. After an exploding-chicken kitchen disaster, Mariel accidentally summons Ozroth the Ruthless. He is a gorgeous demon, once known for his prowess in bargaining for human souls but brought low by a wily human. When her mother pops in to check on how Mariel's summoning practice has gone, Mariel, flustered, says that Ozroth is her boyfriend. Stuck in the human world until he can work out a trade for Mariel's soul, Ozroth is drawn into Mariel's fight against the mayor's plan to tear up a beloved forest to build a luxury resort. Hawley's delightful debut is a welcome addition to the witchy rom-com genre with its ecological flavor, fresh take on the demon realm with a fascinating cosmology, and enticing secondary characters who deserve their own stories. —*Diana Tixier Herald*



SF/Fantasy & Horror

Dead Country.

By Max Gladstone.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Tor.com, paper, $17.99 (9780765395917); e-book, $11.99 (9780765395900).

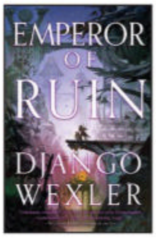
Dead Country launches the new Craft Wars trilogy and continues Gladstone's (*Last Exit*, 2022) story of Tara Abernathy, a Craftswoman who fights shadow and curse with magic forged from logic, will, and soul energy. She's encountered all kinds of epic adventures, but somehow none have been so hard as the simple act of going home to mourn her father's death, of returning to the village she once ran from and facing her mother again. And on arrival, she finds that the Raiders of the Badlands have turned deadly. With childhood friend Connor and unexpected new apprentice Dawn, Tara has to use everything she has to save the town she loves, even if it doesn't love her back. Gladstone's world is intricate and fascinating, and newcomers to it will get enough exposition to be able to enjoy this new trilogy. While the pacing of the narrative is slow, Gladstone's rich, poetic writing, compelling place making, and convincing characters make this a great read, somehow both intensely expansive and satisfyingly contained within a character-based growth narrative. —*Leah von Essen*

Emperor of Ruin.

By Django Wexler.

Mar. 2023. 512p. Orbit, paper, $18.99 (9780316519663); e-book (9780316519649).

Maya, Gyre, and their friends are regrouping after just barely escaping the Corruptor. They know the Corruptor is a grave threat to civilization, so they seek out Xalen at the Forge. Stopping in Skyreach, they discover that the Corruptor has established a new empire there—and declared himself emperor—with the backing of the Twilight Order. Maya's fellow centarch Tanax joins them, and they make their way to the Forge, where they locate Xalen, who tells them that the only way to stop the Corruptor is with an artifact in the Shattered Mountains near Deepfire. Once they arrive, they find Deepfire in turmoil as rumors have spread that the empire is coming. Gyre, informed that Khirkaz has been overwhelmed, heads there, while Maya travels to the mountains searching for the artifact. With a swift-paced narrative and likeable, well-developed characters, the book engages with some very serious issues while maintaining the fantasy action. Religious and political intrigues, sibling rivalry, a sensitive same-sex relationship, and racial and class animosity are all touched on. An outstanding conclusion to the Burningblade & Silvereye trilogy (which began with *Ashes of the Sun*, 2020). —*John Faria*



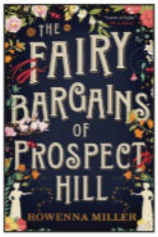
YA: *The youthful characters, sense of adventure, and strained brother/sister relationship between Gyre and Maya will appeal to many teen readers. JF.*

The Fairy Bargains of Prospect Hill.

By Rowenna Miller.

Apr. 2023. 416p. Redhook, paper, $18.99 (9780316378475); e-book (9780316378574).

Alaine Fairborn works hard to keep the family's orchard in Prospect Hill thriving. Occasionally, she and her sister Delphine leave a fairy bargain for small favors like rain or a good harvest. They are continuing the tradition started when their grandfather met a member of the fae in the forest and, in return for a kerchief, was given 50 acres on Prospect Hill. After Delphine marries a rich, influential man and moves away, she struggles to fit in with his family and the society ladies. Alaine struggles to keep the bank from foreclosing on the orchard. She begins to experiment with bigger bargains. When Delphine is desperate and needs Alaine's help, Alaine makes a bargain that has devastating consequences. It then becomes a race for these two sisters to recover what they unwittingly bargained away before they lose it for good. Miller seamlessly blends historical fiction and fantasy to create this enchanting tale of two sisters. The book is awash in period details as well as a vivid fantasy world, but Miller never loses sight of the sisters' relationship that sits at the heart of the story. Readers will be charmed by this tale of sisterhood, female strength, and the fae. —*Lynnanne Pearson*



The Foxglove King.

By Hannah Whitten.

Mar. 2023. 480p. Orbit, $29 (9780316434997); e-book (9780316435192).

Whitten begins *The Foxglove King* with a betrayal: Lore, born a deathwitch, is handed over to the Presque Mort, the religious order that persecutes necromancers, by her adopted mothers. Her Mortem, or death magic, ties her to the catacombs running under the city of Dellaire, and Priest Exalted Anton needs

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Self-Published Books Showcase

These books are recommended by *BlueInk Review,* a fee-based review service. Every month, *BlueInk* will compile a list of their favorite self-published titles for *Booklist,* as a service to librarians hoping to incorporate self-published work into their collections. *BlueInk* was founded by Patti Thorn, former book review editor of Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, and Patricia Moosbrugger, a literary agent who represents several best-selling authors. The company delivers professional, unbiased reviews of self-published books written by critics drawn largely from major mainstream publications and by editors from prominent publishing houses. Stars reflect the decisions of *BlueInk* reviewers and editors. *Booklist* is happy to bring this curated collection of the best in self-publishing for adults and youth to our audience.

from

blueink REVIEW

Adult

The Anti-Inflammatory Cookbook: Autoimmune Protocol–Friendly Recipes from a Chef's Kitchen.

By Shannon Berends.

2022. 224p. Mascot, $26.95 (9781645439691). 641.5.

A Culinary Institute of America–trained chef, Berends worked in prestigious restaurants and food technology before becoming a personal chef to the family of a child with an autoimmune disorder. She created this cookbook so others with inflammatory or autoimmune disorders could enjoy meals with family and friends. "I wanted to write recipes that tasted so good everyone would want to eat them." Her cookbook covers everything from breakfast to dessert, with interesting and mostly easy-to-follow recipes like coconut panna cotta, chicken pot pie, and honey dill carrots. Almost every recipe is accompanied by a gorgeous photograph, and all include storage and reheating instructions. Berends also details the equipment and some of the special ingredients needed. An introduction explaining what an anti-inflammatory diet requires would have been welcome, and some recipes overlook instructions for novice home cooks. For example, Berends' breakfast steak wraps call for "1 beef tenderloin, cooked to your liking," without directions on how to cook the steak. These issues aside, this is an excellent cookbook for those following restricted diets—as well as those who aren't.

Brave New Mars.

By Somerset Meece.

2022. 380p. KWest , $24.95 (9789987065518).

This powerful sf novel with dystopian elements is about a rebellion against the oppressive "corpocracy" that governs Mars. In 2084, a single corporation has purchased Mars. A multibillionaire "Money Monster," the corporation controls the world by utilizing the Mercantile Mind AI mainframe supercomputer software, which has no respect for human rights and only considers how to maximize profits. When miner Perry Walker comes to Mars searching for markets for minerals found in space and for a romantic partner, he recognizes the oppression forced on Martians. After he meets Carry, the two challenge the inhuman Martian societal order and launch a revolt against the devious government. A high-tech, futuristic, rocket-head space drama coated with a thoughtful grasp of the human psyche, the novel examines the obsessive pursuit of wealth and power. It's well paced, with masterful and unsettling monologues about untrustworthy machines and AI. This gripping tale will engage sf readers and appeal to anyone curious about what it could be like to live in space in a near-term dystopian future.

Closing the Confidence Gap: Boost Your Peace, Your Potential, and Your Paycheck.

By Kelli Thompson.

2022. 264p. Amplify, $29.99 (9781637554203). 658.4.

Thompson left corporate America to be an entrepreneur and coach in 2019, realizing that she had followed all the rules, but it didn't make her happy—because she wasn't adhering to her own values. Her book aims to help women identify their values and build careers that honor them. Now a speaker and founder of the Clarity & Confidence Women's Leadership Program, Thompson skillfully delineates her program's concepts and practices. She references a study showing that even when women outperform men, they're less confident about their work and less likely to ask for raises, high-profile projects, and other opportunities. The author shines in convincing readers that giving in to impostor syndrome or low confidence comes with major costs to readers' paychecks, experiences, and happiness levels. Between engaging stories of her own career, case studies of friends and clients, questions for self-reflection, and "tool kits" from her coaching program, Thompson offers a compelling argument for learning to "own who you are, trust yourself, amplify your voice, and show up as the authentic, powerful woman leader you are meant to be."

Dead Reckoning.

By Lea O'Harra.

2022. 289p. Sharpe, paper, $9.10 (9798361831937).

This suspense novel centers on Gilly, who returns to her hometown near Chicago for her mother's funeral after living for a decade in Japan. When Gilly and her husband arrive, Gilly's best friend Sally tells her that "it's happening again." When they were girls, the friends discovered a dead baby in a shoebox in the cemetery. After they secretly buried the body in Gilly's yard, strange things started happening. Flowers were mysteriously left in strollers, and then two local children disappeared and were murdered. Although a killer confessed, there's doubt surrounding the tragedy. Flowers started appearing in strollers again shortly before Gilly's return, and when another child is abducted, Gilly fears the worst. O'Harra delivers an interesting tale of intrigue as Gilly evolves from a mousy woman in a somewhat abusive marriage into an assertive heroine who ends up saving herself as she seeks to save the missing baby. Believable characters and descriptive prose will draw readers in as they enjoy discovering whodunit clues and watching the protagonist bloom. Highly recommended for fans of Denise Mina's *Garnethill.*

The Excursion.

By T. O. Paine.

2022. 420p. Dark Swallow, paper, $12.99 (9798986695808).

In this fast-paced thriller, Charly Highsmith has led a troubled life. Her mother struggles with addiction and is dying, and her father disappeared when she was 10. When her mother reveals Charly's father has died, leaving her money and a key to the family's cabin, Charly plans a reunion with her brother and cousins. But once in the snowy mountains, Charly and her autistic brother, Jacob, find the remote cabin already occupied by Randall Thorne, a man determined to provide his wealthy client with the chance to hunt. What Charly doesn't know is that Randall has brought his prey with him: there's a man being kept prisoner in the boathouse. Chapters alternate between Charly's current and past experiences at the cabin, revealing trouble between herself, her brother, and her two cousins. Events also unfold from the point of view of Randall, a captivating villain. While the minor characters get short shrift, fast-moving events, strong dialogue, cliff-hanger chapter endings, and increasing suspicion that Charly's past will play a part in events make this a gripping read.

History according to SAT: A Content Guide to SAT Reading and Writing.

By Elizabeth Breau.

2022. 274p. Prep for Success, paper, $11.99 (9798986029108). 900.

Breau's study guide is designed to help students connect "relevant background knowledge" with the rise of democratic ideologies for today's SAT. According to the author, understanding historical context is essential for the test. Thus, instead of focusing on the test-taking strategies and skills/drills common to SAT prep books, she offers a chronological view of important historical topics and concepts, from the Middle Ages to today's global struggle for human rights. Breau uses asterisks to indicate that a longer explanation of the word, name, or idea will follow at the end of the paragraph. Important names and phrases appear in bold. She also discusses key concepts, such as transcendentalism and fascism, along with SAT perennials: the Cold War, important speeches and documents, and more. The discussion is at times a bit oversimplified and dry. Its march-through-time organization shows the inter-relationship of events but would have substantially benefitted from adding essential questions (e.g., What central concepts of Renaissance Humanism are still part of free societies?). Nonetheless, students will find Breau's guide a useful orientation to the SAT overall.

A Portion of Malice.

By Lloyd Jeffries.

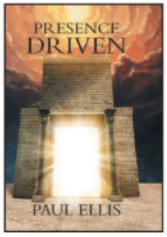
2022. 366p. Buckminster, paper, $13.99 (9798985526912).

Jeffries' first installment in his Ages of Malice saga, an apocalyptic thriller, follows a journalist who becomes entangled in a conflict between immortals. Emery Merrick has won two Pulitzer Prizes, but his personal life is in shambles. After drug and alcohol abuse led to him losing both his pregnant wife, who left him, and his prestigious job at the *Times,* Merrick plans to commit suicide—until a giant of a man knocks on Merrick's door with a lucrative offer: to write the biography of revered international peacemaker Thaddeus Drake. Merrick accepts, only to learn that Drake is actually Cain from the Old Testament, an almost 6,000-year-old immortal bent on ruling all of Earth's inhabitants. Strong writing, well-developed characters, relentless pacing, and a deftly plotted story line make this an enjoyable read. Merrick, in particular, is an endearing and identifiable everyperson of sorts. And while the conclusion isn't exactly satisfying—more of a respite before a sequel—fans of authors like Dan Brown should enjoy this unique and audacious reimagining of biblical myth, with a twist.

★ Presence Driven.

By Paul Ellis.

2022. 160p. Quantum Discovery, paper, $8.99 (9781958690550). 204.

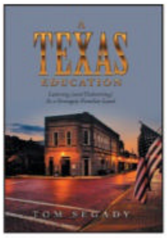


Reverend Ellis challenges Christians to live not only purpose-driven but "presence-driven" lives to reach the full potential of their calling. Drawing from the lives of Bible greats like Adam, Jonah, King David, Esther, and more, Ellis teaches the importance of having the presence of God in our lives: "You can have purpose without presence, but you cannot have presence without purpose." Using the Bible as his only source, Ellis works his way through some of its most well-known stories, paraphrasing, embellishing, and modernizing archaic characters to help readers connect with his message. For example, Ellis writes of King David: "The Drifters were playing their song 'Up on the Roof' on David's radio as though they were welcoming him to this rooftop encounter." Beautifully written and smart, Ellis' book touches the hearts of believers and challenges them to seek more than just purpose. Christians interested in living life to its fullest, leaving a legacy, and making a difference in the world will find Ellis' teachings fresh and inspiring.

★ A Texas Education: Learning (and Unlearning) in a Strangely Familiar Land.

By Tom Segady.

2022. 180p. iUniverse, paper, $13.99 (9781663235466). 378.0092.



Segady's autobiography is a contemplative study of a young man's journey that begins with a teenage desire to visit the sunny climes of Southern California. With backpack firmly hoisted on shoulder and visions of a Kerouac-like experience, the author embarks on his journey at age 18. As he hitchhikes to California, he mistakenly ends up in Texas—a part of the country he's determined not to revisit after his initial encounters with suspicious locals who greet disheveled outsiders warily. Ironically, after he finally reaches his ultimate destination and earns a PhD, fate deals him an unexpected hand: he gets his first teaching position—back in Texas. The remainder of the book follows him after that point, giving readers insight into what he learns about life looking through his students' eyes and on his journeys as far away as India. Segady is a polished storyteller whose story reads more like a novel than a list of names, dates, and places. It shines because of the valuable nuggets of wisdom Segady drops along the way. For armchair travelers, this is one to savor.

Youth

Torn.

By Russ Thompson.

2022. 110p. Finding Forward, paper, $6.99 (9781737315759).

This short, quietly engaging novel is narrated by Perry, a high-school track runner who seriously hurts his knee after trying to catch someone stealing a package from his porch. He later discovers that the young thief, Doyle, is dating his younger sister and is one of the students in the peer tutoring class Perry volunteers in. Working toward a track scholarship, Perry continues to run after his injury, risking further damage. Adult readers will immediately realize how dangerous this could be, but Perry has to learn the hard way. Perry's changing relationship with Doyle is nicely layered and authentic. He's angry at first, believing Doyle destroyed his track career, but his attitude begins to shift when he learns about Doyle's difficult home life as a foster child. Watching Perry help this young man is heartening, and the novel's language—simple, plain, and often delivered in one-sentence paragraphs—makes for an easy read that could particularly appeal to those who struggle with long narratives. All young readers, though, will appreciate the plot and life lessons the story ably imparts.

Continued from p.31

her power to discover why entire villages are dying, each in a single night. Meanwhile, his brother, King August, forces her to spy on Crown Prince Bastian, whom he suspects of colluding with the neighboring Kirythean Empire. Teamed up with priestly duke Gabe, Lore is rushed into high society and rapidly discovers that Bastian is smarter and more in tune with the general populace than his aloof playboy persona suggests. The three of them together delve into and under Dellaire, speaking to the living and dead in their attempt to unravel the mysterious deaths and the king's plot. Readers are kept guessing throughout as characters make questionable decisions while sorting out the various levels of intrigue in this series starter. *—Frances Moritz*

The God of Endings.

By Jacqueline Holland.

Mar. 2023. 480p. Flatiron, $29.99 (9781250856760); e-book (9781250856777).

Collette has changed her name many times. She has lived many lives. And now, as she runs an elite day care in upstate New York, all she wants is quiet and rest. Unfortunately, the hunger that she's felt for hundreds of years is getting harder to resist. Have her many lifetimes finally caught up to her? What will Collette do when faced with yet another end? Holland's debut alternates between Collette's past and her present day. Her long life is measured by the connections she makes with mortals, both good and bad. Collette's fear as her life spirals out of control, as well as her concern and care for her tiny students, humanizes her. The novel is full of the suspense of living a double life and figuring out how to go on when you have very little left to give. Recommended for fans of literary vampire stories that focus on the struggles of immortality, like Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). *—Ashley Rayner*

A House with Good Bones.

By T. Kingfisher.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Tor Nightfire, $26.99 (9781250829795).

Kingfisher (*What Moves the Dead*, 2022) presents a southern gothic with a twist, swapping out an isolated mansion for an unassuming tract home in a North Carolina subdivision. When her latest dig gets canceled, Sam, a 32-year-old archaeoentomologist—she studies bugs at archaeological sites—goes to stay with her mom in the home previously occupied by her abusive grandmother. When Sam arrives, her mom is acting as if she is under surveillance, and there are vultures surrounding the house. Immediately unsettled, readers will quickly fall into Sam's conversational narration as she injects nerdy humor, worries about her mom, and shares facts about bugs, her grandmother's rose bushes, and more. As each day passes, things get stranger and more dangerous, and it becomes undeniably clear that something supernatural is at work—and then the wild and witchy, action-packed final act is unleashed. For fans of stories that take the haunted-house trope and overlay occult themes with generational trauma, like *The Good House*, by Tananarive Due (2003), and *How to Sell a Haunted House*, by Grady Hendrix (2023). *—Becky Spratford*

Loki's Ring.

By Stina Leicht.

Mar. 2023. 512p. Saga, paper, $18.99 (9781982170639); e-book (9781982170653).

Leicht's (*Persephone Station*, 2021) latest space opera follows a variety of characters as they deal with a looming interstellar political conflict centered on the mysterious megastructure known only as Loki's Ring. The various viewpoints include Gita Chithra, a Terran Republic of Worlds starship captain and AI scientist who remains emotionally scarred from an incident in which multiple crew members under her care died; her estranged friend and former crewmate, Karter; her equally estranged adopted AI daughter, Ri; and many others. When Ri ends up being forced to land on the surface of Loki's Ring during an undercover mission on a vessel owned by the human-centric, corporation-dominated Norton Independent Alliance, the ensuing chaos not only pulls in her family and their extended friends but also ultimately reveals the purpose and history of Loki's Ring itself. While at times Leicht's narrative suffers from its overabundance of characters and plotting at the expense of action and characterization, this new novel will appeal to fans of her previous work and those who enjoy more diverse, LGBTQ-themed space operas. *—Nell Keep*

The Magician's Daughter.

By H. G. Parry.

Feb. 2023. 400p. Orbit, $18.99 (9780316383707); e-book (9780316383806).

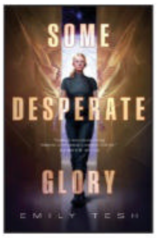
Biddy, 16, has only known life with mage Rowan and his familiar, Hutchincroft, on the magical island of Hy-Brasil. Rowan leaves the island nightly, transforming into a raven. When Rowan does not return one night, Hutch and Biddy realize he is in trouble. Biddy learns the truth of why they hide on the island—Rowan has been a fugitive from the Council for 70 years. The Council, led by the evil Vaughan Carlisle, is supposed to be safeguarding the magic that is left in the world, but Rowan suspects that Carlisle is hoarding the available magic for his own nefarious reasons. Rescuing Rowan sets Biddy on a path to discover more about magic, herself, and the world. Parry has written another winning fantasy novel full of adventure, found family, and magic. This is a fully realized world that feels like a homage to the classic fantasy tales of Diana Wynne Jones. It is also Biddy's coming-of-age story as she reckons with her place in the world and the fact that her parental figures are not perfect. For readers who love a great fantasy adventure. *—Lynnanne Pearson*

YA: *Teen fans of Diana Wynne Jones will enjoy this coming-of-age tale. LP.*

Some Desperate Glory.

By Emily Tesh.

Apr. 2023. 448p. Tor.com, $28.99 (9781250834980); e-book (9781250834997).



All her life, Kyr has worked to become the perfect soldier. She believes more than anything in the mission of Gaea Station to finish the war against the majoda and its unstoppable technology, the Wisdom, which once destroyed planet Earth. But when her brother Mags disappears from the station, and her assignment goes horribly wrong, Kyr decides to go rogue. Tesh's epic space opera is bound to make waves as one of the best sf novels of 2023. Fans of *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* will fall hard for this story of a girl bred to be a killer and desperate to prove herself, only to discover she's fighting for the wrong side. Tesh doesn't make Kyr's inner journey easy, and that's where the genius of this book lies: it is painful for Kyr to confront the ugliness of her world and its neat, binary values. Tesh asks us what humanity should stand for, questions what shape justice should take, and forces us to take a stark look at what Kyr has to give up in order to be better. Her growth is what powers this expansive story with an action-packed pace full of exciting battles and gut-wrenching twists. *—Leah von Essen*

YA: *Though it's a dark book, teen readers will enjoy the characters and their journey. LvE.*

Voice of the Stranger.

By Eric Schaller.

Mar. 2023. 210p. Lethe, paper, $18 (9781590217443); e-book (9781005194284).

Voice of the Stranger, collecting Schaller's variously published stories in one volume, begins by reminding the reader of the childhood taboo about speaking to strangers and how every new book is an interaction with a stranger. The works are sorted into three sections, titled "Past Tense," "Present Tense," and "Future Tense," plus two bonus stories. As one might assume, the past section is set in previous eras, including one story of horrifying nineteenth-century science starring Charles Darwin as a Sherlock Holmes–style investigator. However, the future section isn't necessarily set in the future but rather deals with notions like advanced technology, premonitions, and a zombie-apocalypse retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood." Of additional interest are story notes describing inspirations for each piece, whether Schaller's background in biology or trips taken in his youth. There's something here for everyone interested in the unsettling or macabre. Tales include clearly supernatural ghost stories as well as inexplicable happenings that may be mundane as well as stories where the true horror is found in the actions of humankind. *—Sarah Rice*

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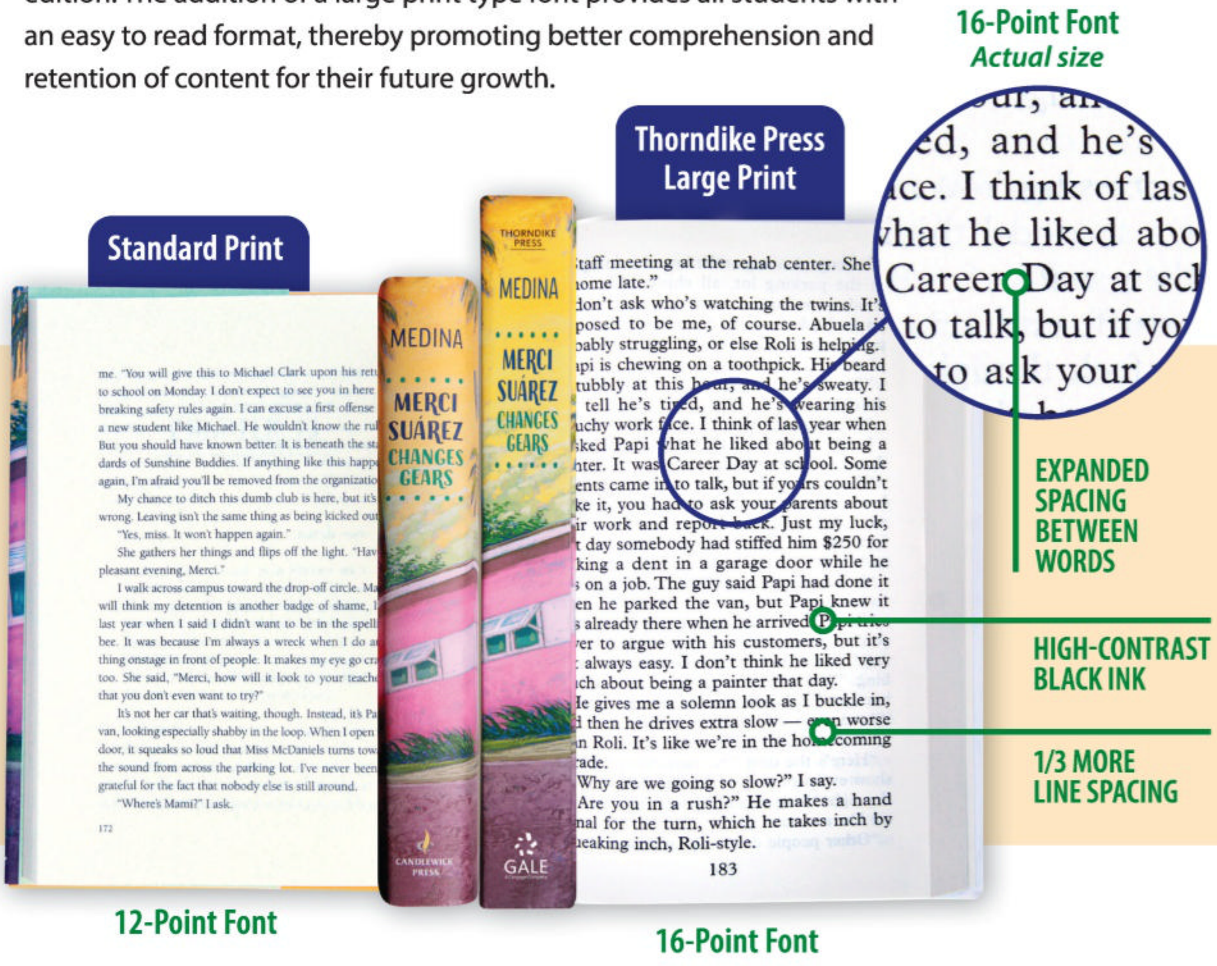
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me. "You will give this to Michael Clark upon his retu
to school on Monday. I don't expect to see you in here
breaking safety rules again. I can excuse a first offense
a new student like Michael. He wouldn't know the rul
But you should have known better. It is beneath the sta
dards of Sunshine Buddies. If anything like this happe
again, I'm afraid you'll be removed from the organizatio
My chance to ditch this dumb club is here, but it's
wrong. Leaving isn't the same thing as being kicked out
"Yes, miss. It won't happen again."
She gathers her things and flips off the light. "Hav
pleasant evening, Merci."
I walk across campus toward the drop-off circle. Ma
will think my detention is another badge of shame, l
last year when I said I didn't want to be in the spelli
bee. It was because I'm always a wreck when I do a
thing onstage in front of people. It makes my eye go cra
too. She said, "Merci, how will it look to your teache
that you don't even want to try?"
It's not her car that's waiting, though. Instead, it's Pa
van, looking especially shabby in the loop. When I open
door, it squeaks so loud that Miss McDaniels turns tow
the sound from across the parking lot. I've never been
grateful for the fact that nobody else is still around.
"Where's Mami?" I ask.

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taff meeting at the rehab center. She
ome late."
don't ask who's watching the twins. It's
posed to be me, of course. Abuela is
bably struggling, or else Roli is helping.
pi is chewing on a toothpick. His beard
tubbly at this hour, and he's sweaty. I
tell he's tired, and he's wearing his
uchy work face. I think of last year when
sked Papi what he liked about being a
nter. It was Career Day at school. Some
ents came in to talk, but if yours couldn't
ke it, you had to ask your parents about
ir work and report back. Just my luck,
t day somebody had stiffed him $250 for
king a dent in a garage door while he
s on a job. The guy said Papi had done it
en he parked the van, but Papi knew it
s already there when he arrived. Papi tries
ver to argue with his customers, but it's
always easy. I don't think he liked very
ch about being a painter that day.
He gives me a solemn look as I buckle in,
d then he drives extra slow — even worse
n Roli. It's like we're in the homecoming
rade.
Why are we going so slow?" I say.
Are you in a rush?" He makes a hand
nal for the turn, which he takes inch by
eaking inch, Roli-style.

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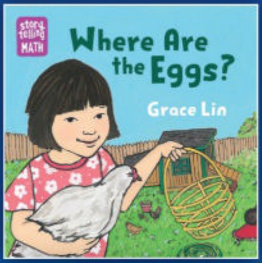
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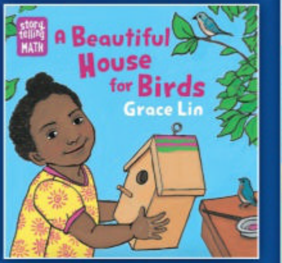
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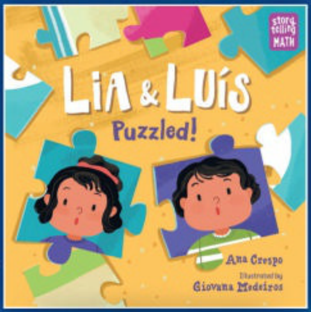
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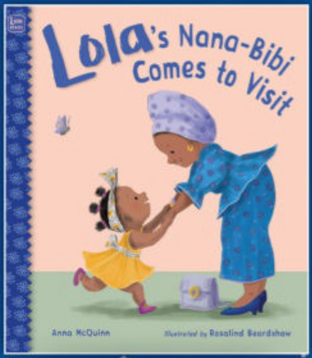
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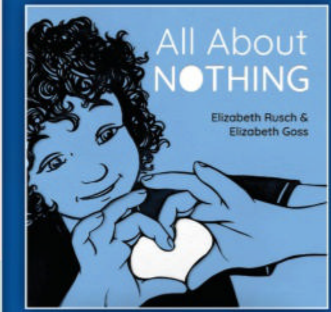
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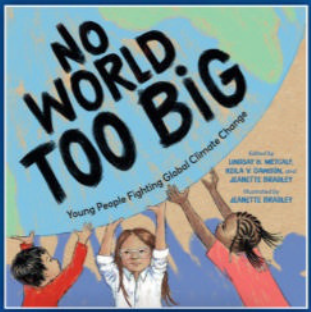
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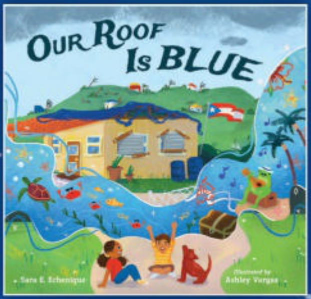
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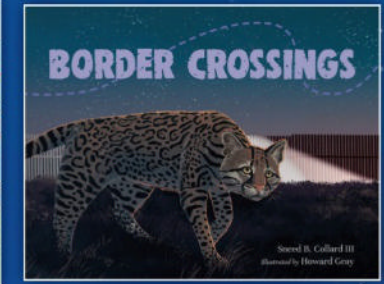
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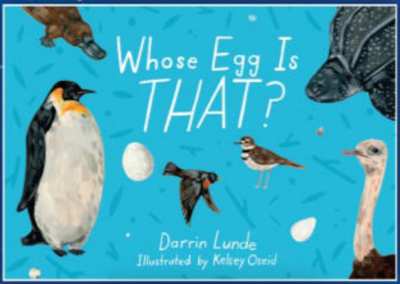
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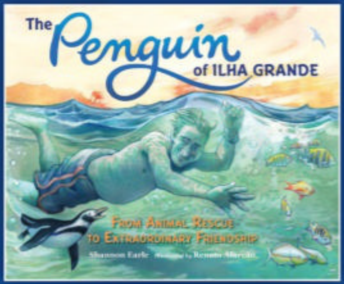
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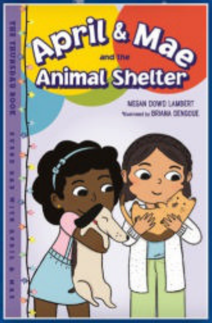
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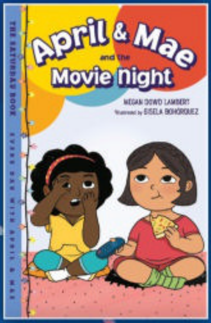
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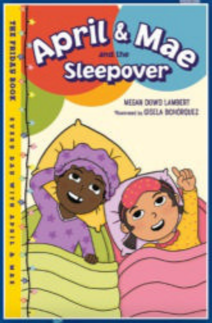
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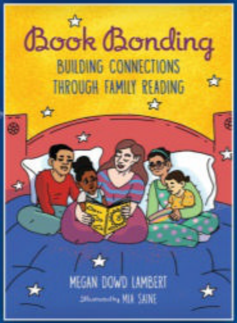
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There are many superstitions about numbers in Chinese **culture**. It is common for people in China to plan important events on dates they consider lucky. For example, the number nine in Mandarin Chinese sounds like another word meaning "long-lasting." A wedding held on a date ending in nine is thought to lead to a long marriage.

Numerologists say the age 21 is lucky, but they call 63 unlucky. However, becoming 64 is said to bring good luck. This superstition states that living past 63 means a person will live many years longer.

10

Holding a wedding on a lucky date is important in Chinese culture.

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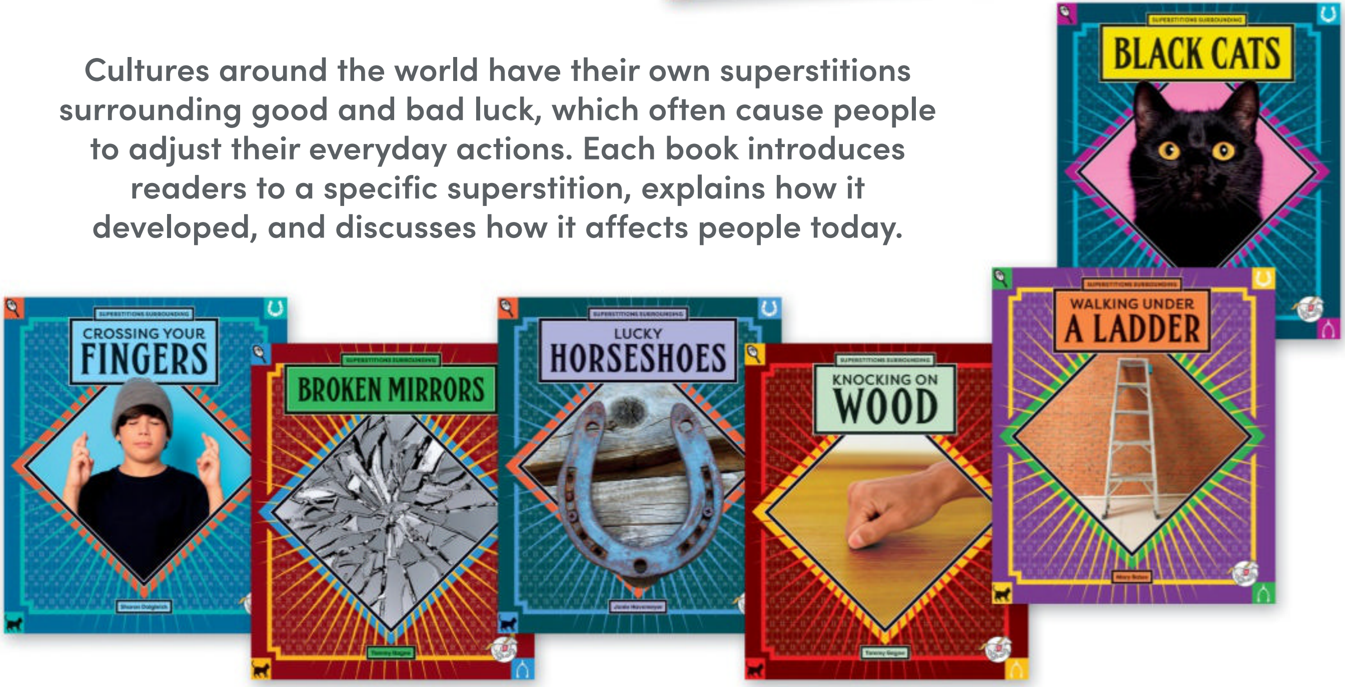
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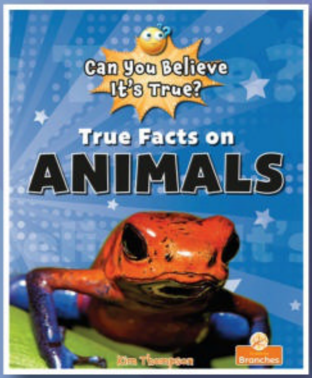
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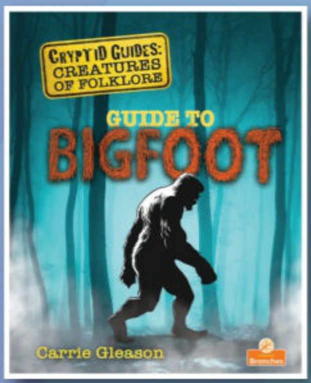
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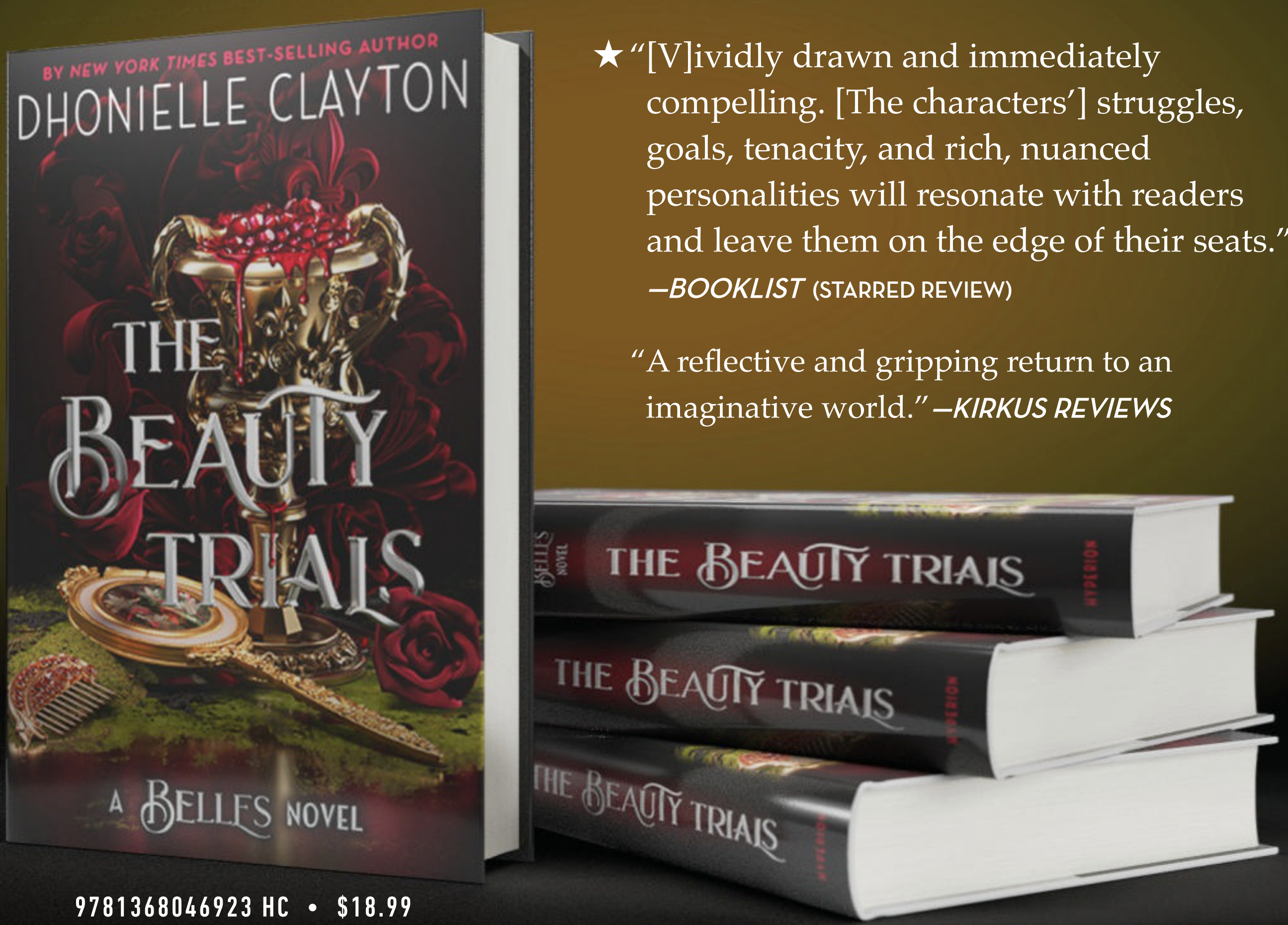
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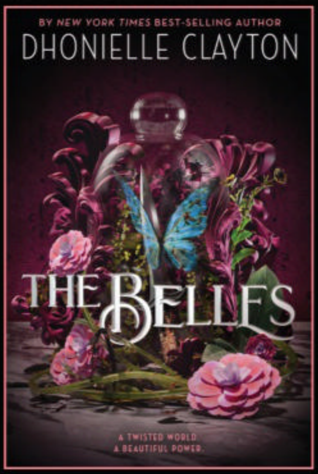
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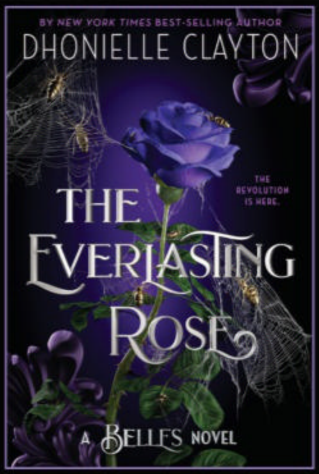
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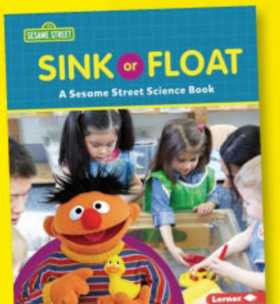
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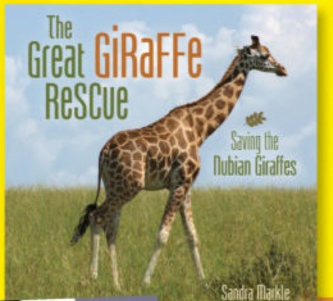
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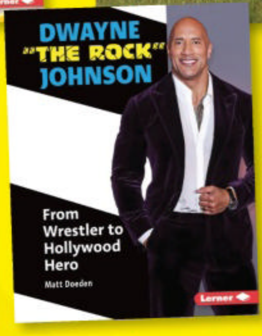
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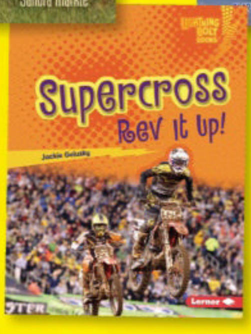
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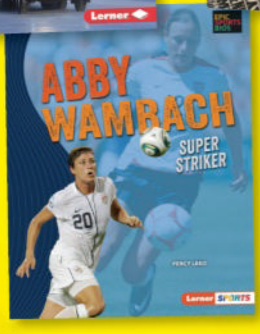
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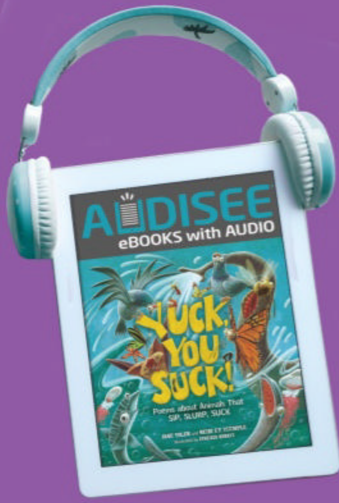
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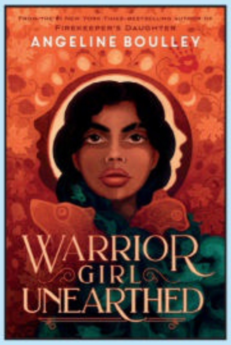
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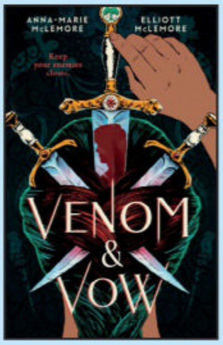
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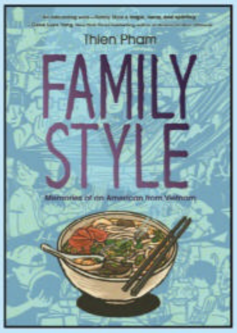
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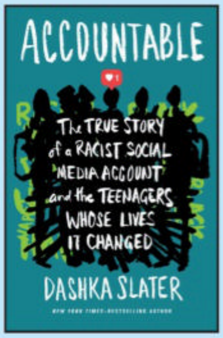
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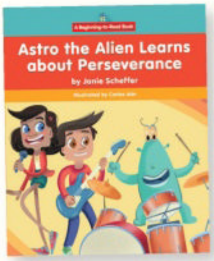
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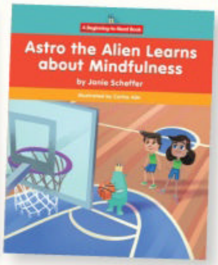
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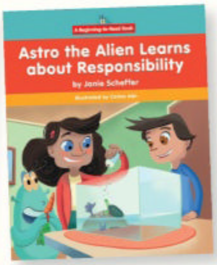
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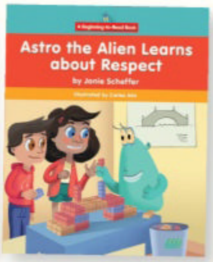
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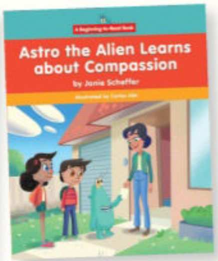
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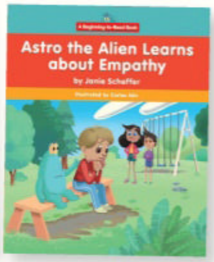
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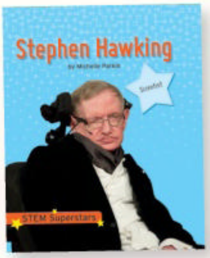
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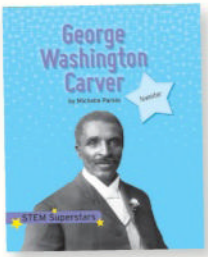
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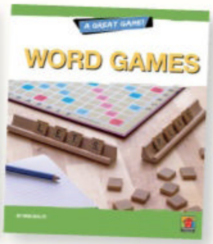
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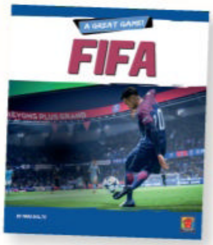
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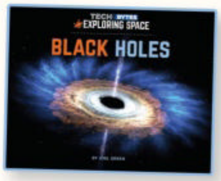
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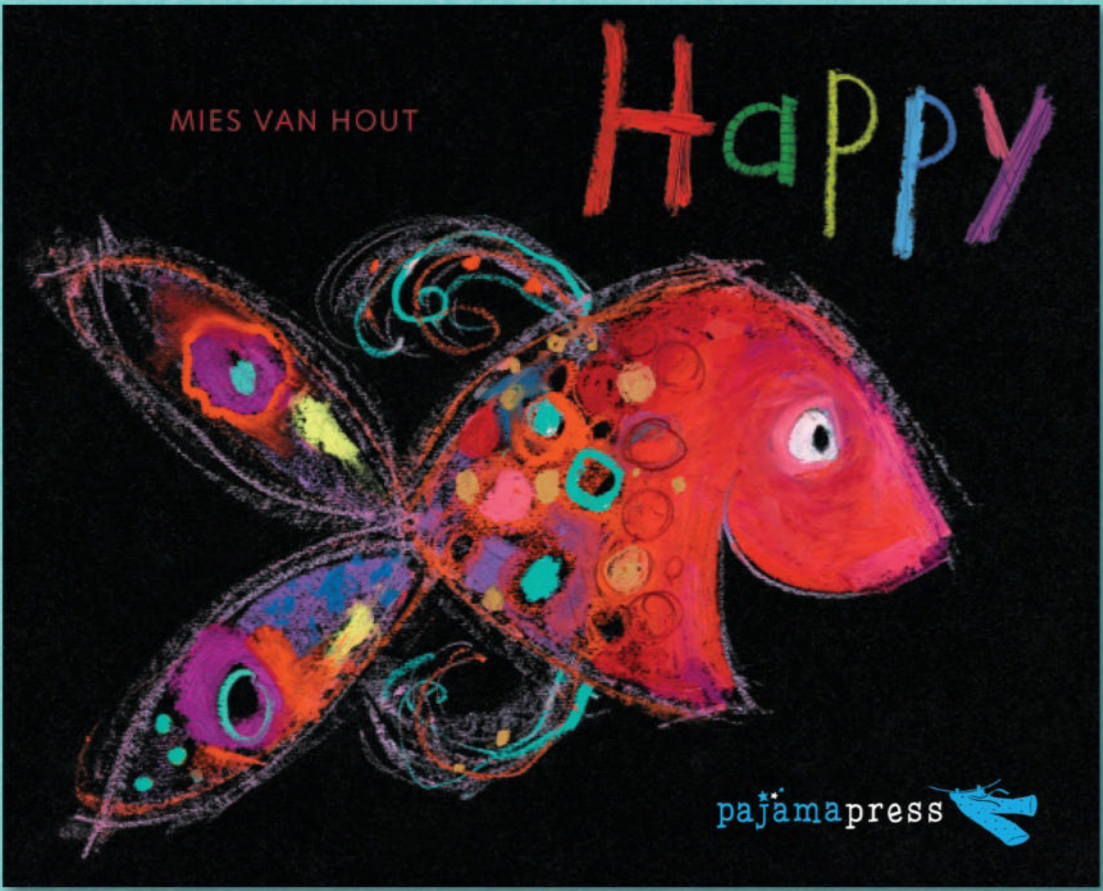

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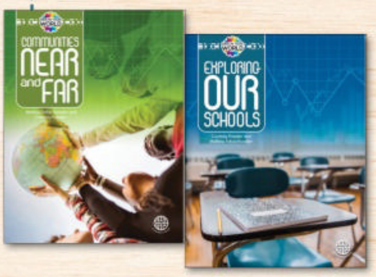
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Some people identify as both Black and Hispanic or White and Hispanic. Different data sources count these people differently. Some data sources count these people in both categories (under Black and Hispanic). Other data sources (like the data sources used for this book) only include them under the category of Hispanic.

Frequently Used Terms for Racial & Ethnic Groups by the U.S. Government in 2021

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander
- White
- More than one race

Perhaps most importantly, the way we view and understand race and ethnicity has more to do with our thinking than it does with a scientific method of categorizing people. Like our society, the language we use to discuss race and ethnicity is always evolving.

The Changing Categories of Ethnic Groups in the U.S.

The terms the government uses to define people have changed multiple times over the years, and will probably continue to change for years to come. For example, Hawaiian, Part Hawaiian, Samoan, and Guamanian used to fall under the Asian category on a census form. Now they have their own category: Pacific Islander.

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
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A piece from the Heavenly Bodies **exhibition**

Pieces from the Art of Africa collection

Armor for Man and Horse from 1548

Museum collections are always growing. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met) in New York City is the largest art museum in the United States and is still growing! The Met is constantly acquiring new paintings, sculptures, and more. In 2020, the museum accepted over 2,500 new works! But the building can only hold so many works, so the museum also sells, or **deaccessions** art each year.

DEACCESSIONING IN HARD TIMES

During the COVID-19 pandemic, museums across the globe had to close. Some turned to deaccessioning to st

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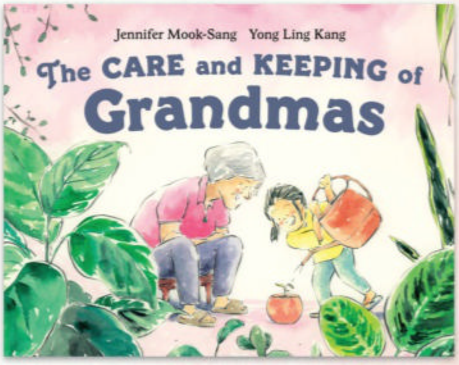
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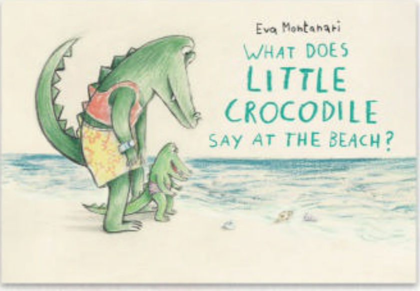
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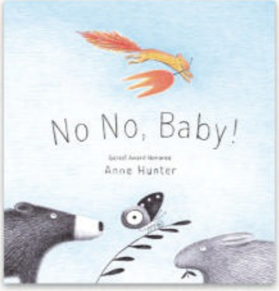
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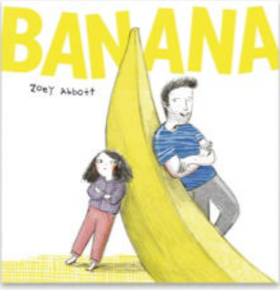
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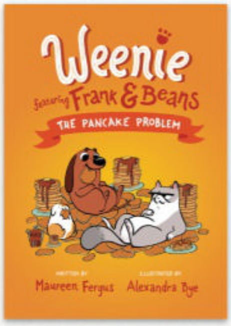
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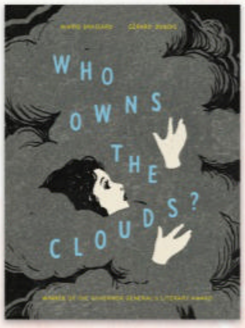
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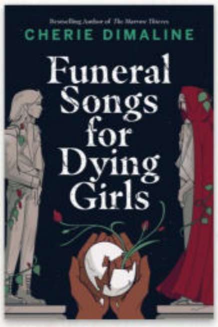
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Youth Nonfiction

Older Readers

The Big Backyard: The Solar System beyond Pluto.

By Ron Miller.

Mar. 2023. 104p. illus. Lerner/Twenty-First Century, lib. ed., $37.32 (9781728475349). Gr. 7–10. 523.49.

Many books about our solar system begin with the sun and work their way progressively outward, culminating with one final chapter on what may be lurking out there in the cosmos beyond Pluto. This engaging offering is dedicated to that previously mysterious space and offers current updates (through 2022) on new astronomical discoveries. The first few chapters do review the more familiar parts of the solar system but only through the guise of how these inner planets compare with the Kuiper Belt's far-flung moons, comets, and asteroids (and whatever lies beyond). The text is engaging, occasionally alluding to science fiction works and popular conspiracy theories, and uses accessible examples, like comparing Pluto's craters to small bites out of a bowl of oatmeal. Pages are filled with full-color photos and eye-catching illustrations (the author's artwork appears regularly in *Scientific American* and *Astronomy),* plus charts, diagrams, maps, and sidebars. Back matter includes a glossary, source notes, a bibliography, and resources for further exploration. This inviting offering will be welcomed by student researchers and space nerds alike. —*Kathleen McBroom*

Rising Class: How Three First-Generation College Students Conquered Their First Year.

By Jennifer Miller.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Farrar, $18.99 (9780374313579). Gr. 10–12. 378.19.

Journalist Miller investigates three individuals as they commence their first year of college at the brink of the pandemic. Briani is a Latina from Lawrenceville, Georgia; Connor and Jacklyn (who present as white) originate from Springfield, Missouri. Briani and Connor attend Columbia University while Jaclyn commutes to Ozark Technical Community College. All three are the first in their families to go to college but face distinct social-class struggles. While the outside world may have preconceived notions about them (often biased ones), these students carry invisible scars, such as anxiety, family issues, financial insecurity, and, now, COVID-19. Miller's book sheds light on costly tuition rates and resource disparities, particularly at Ivy League institutions. She also does a thorough job of researching her subjects, exposing the highlights and pitfalls freshman year can hold. Readers of diverse economic backgrounds and those who have been impacted by the pandemic schooling system will find something to relate to with Briani, Connor, and Jacklyn. —*Beronica Garcia*

Middle Readers

Are We Having Fun Yet? The Human Quest for a Good Time.

By Maria Birmingham. Illus. by Katy Dockrill.

Mar. 2023. 80p. Orca, $29.95 (9781459830943). Gr. 4–7. 790.

This appealing title in the Orca Timeline series describes toys and activities (games, sports, music, technology) that kids and adults have enjoyed around the world from antiquity to the present. The book showcases a range of leisure activities in the form of festivals, powwows, flash mobs, parades, fairs, thrill rides, and fireworks displays. It reveals how popular puzzles were during the first stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Advanced technology and fads that have come and gone are mentioned, as are pastimes that have changed focus (e.g., circuses no longer featuring live animals). Birmingham admits that she couldn't include every possible activity here and that many more will evolve in the future, such as space tourism. The lively illustrations, color and historical photos, and "It's a Fact" sidebars supplement the text nicely (along with a glossary, resources, and an index—not seen). The book also reinforces the fact that play provides SEL support. Kids interested in learning how humans have spent their leisure time, over time, will enjoy this fun book full of fascinating information. —*Sharon Rawlins*

The Art and Life of Hilma af Klint.

By Ylva Hillström. Illus. by Karin Eklund.

Tr. by B. J. Epstein.

Feb. 2023. 64p. Thames & Hudson, $19.95 (9780500653173). Gr. 2–5. 759.85.

In a welcome wave of picture-book biographies about forgotten women artists comes this Swedish import about Hilma af Klint. While the text employs a traditional format—noting Klint's childhood in Sweden, artistic influences, career path, and various ups and downs—the story itself is more unusual. After the death of her younger sister, Klint became fascinated by mysticism and the spirit world, even collaborating with a secret society of friends called The Five. Her paintings increasingly reflected this interest, progressing from photorealistic portraits and landscapes to abstract colors, shapes, and symbols. While Wassily Kandinsky is often credited as the first abstract artist, the author contends that Klint's abstract paintings predate his by several years. This part of her story *is* typical, unfortunately, as the author recounts how women were often dismissed in formal art programs and Klint was snubbed by prominent critic Rudolph Steiner. Pale, mixed-media, and occasionally otherworldly illustrations fittingly reflect Klint's story and allow reproductions of her artwork to take the spotlight. An intriguing tribute to this once-misunderstood and overlooked pioneer. —*Angela Leeper*

Dig Deep: Connecting Archaeology, Oceans and Us.

By Nicole F. Smith.

Mar. 2023. 48p. illus. Orca/Footprints, $21.95 (9781459826083). Gr. 4–7. 930.1028.

The bountiful Orca Footprints series continues with a fresh take on recurring environmental themes. Archaeologist Smith opens with an intriguing introduction to coastal archaeology and artifacts left by ancient humans, such as marine snail-shell beads discovered in South Africa's Blombos Cave. In the second chapter, she explains how scientists are using evidence from these archaeological sites to understand changes to the environment. For instance, archaeologists examining fur-seal bones in Argentina not only study the animals' change in diet but how overhunting and overfishing changed their food sources. The author also departs from traditional Western science in a chapter on generational knowledge among Indigenous communities and how these communities apply their ancestral knowledge toward initiatives like sustainable fishing and gardening. Finally, Smith encourages readers to consider what future archaeologists will think about our "Plastic Age" and how kids can help reduce plastic use and protect coastal environments now. As in previous volumes, chunked text and numerous color photos of science in action make this an accessible and inviting look at ecology. —*Angela Leeper*

Hanging with Vampires: A Totally Factual Field Guide to the Supernatural.

By Insha Fitzpatrick. Illus. by Lilla Bölecz.

Mar. 2023. 128p. Quirk, paper, $14.99 (9781683693413). Gr. 4–7. 398.45.

In this opener to the Totally Factual Field Guide to the Supernatural series, Fitzpatrick focuses on vampires in a fang-in-cheek tone, beginning with such basics as their physical characteristics and special powers, as well as how humans turn into them. Any good guidebook leaves readers feeling prepared, and this one is no exception, offering tips on how to fight vampires. Successive chapters turn to the history and European folklore that helped create the vampire legends and other bloodsuckers from around the world—including the "goat sucker" chupacabra from Puerto Rico and the undead jiangshi from China, which craves life forces. The final chapters look at vampires throughout literature and film, noting the historical lack of LGBTQ+ vampires and vampires of color along with standout portrayals in media. Intermittent sidebars within chapters relate science, history, and pop culture to vampire legends, while related activities (like a garlic-bread recipe to ward off vampires) and fictional interviews with Bram Stoker and Vlad the Impaler entertain between chapters. Eye-catching illustrations and plenty of red complete this sanguine selection. —*Angela Leeper*

Her Eyes on the Stars: Maria Mitchell, Astronomer.

By Laurie Wallmark. Illus. by Liz Wong.

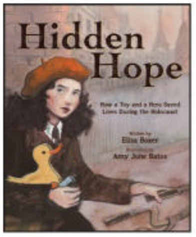
May 2023. 40p. Creston, $19.99 (9781954354135). Gr. 2–5. 520.

As a child, Maria Mitchell accompanied her father to their home's rooftop observatory, where they could view the night sky through a telescope. Born in 1818, she became fascinated by solar eclipses and adept at using and repairing the tools necessary for making astronomical measurements. Once, when her father was away, a whaling ship's captain relied on 13-year-old Maria to repair his marine chronometer, a vital tool for navigation, and she succeeded. In 1847, Mitchell became the first American ever to discover a comet. Two years later, she was employed as an astronomer. Later, she taught astronomy at Vassar College and encouraged many of her students to pursue careers in the field. Wallmark's earlier picture books on women's contributions to STEM fields include *Ada Byron Lovelace and the Thinking Machine* (2015) and *Hedy Lamarr's Double Life* (2019). Wong's appealing illustrations are orderly in composition and subtle in their use of color. An interesting addition to the current book's back matter is a brief section listing Mitchell's "Rules of Astronomical Observations." A pleasing, informative introduction to Maria Mitchell. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Hidden Hope: How a Toy and a Hero Saved Lives during the Holocaust.

By Elisa Boxer. Illus. by Amy June Bates.

Mar. 2023. 48p. Abrams, $19.99 (9781419750007). Gr. 1–4. 940.53.



In this dramatic true story, readers encounter Jacqueline Gauthier, a teenager in the French Resistance, who navigated a network of subterfuge to save hundreds of threatened Jews during WWII by concealing forged documents within a toy that she biked to families in hiding. "After all, who would suspect / that a wooden duck / . . . had a secret? // A hidden compartment. / Hope in a hollow." But this young woman held a dangerous secret of her own: her real name was Judith Geller, and she, too, was Jewish. Boxer's action-packed recounting of Geller's determination, selflessness, and agency is a refreshing alternative to the more prolific gentile-savior stories of the Holocaust. The efficient yet informative text conveys the urgency of Geller's mission, with occasional words enlarged for emphasis or offset, hurtling like Geller on her precious bicycle. Bates' muted Old World palette is reminiscent of her stunning work in *Gittel's Journey* (2019). These evocative, shadowy panels are punctuated vibrantly with pops of red from Geller's beret. One particularly haunting spread casts the reader's gaze through a jagged, broken windowpane to bear witness to soldiers' cruelties. With extensive back matter supporting both the author's and the illustrator's work, this is a harrowing account of one girl's bravery and a compelling assurance for youth that everyone has a potential hero within. —*Kit Ballenger*

Jovita Wore Pants: The Story of a Mexican Freedom Fighter.

By Aida Salazar. Illus. by Molly Mendoza.

Mar. 2023. 48p. Scholastic, $19.99 (9781338283419). Gr. 1–4. 972.08.

This illustrated history follows Jovita Valdovinos, an early twentieth-century Mexican freedom fighter, who takes matters into her own hands after she isn't permitted to join the Cristero War with her father and brothers. Jovita is supposed to stay home and wear skirts (among other expectations), but all she wants is to ride her stallion and race her brothers—all while wearing pants! When soldiers burn down her house, leaving her abuela and sisters with nothing, Jovita takes a stand, cutting her hair, calling herself Juan, and riding into battle dressed in the outfit she dreamed of. Mendoza's vibrant, dreamlike paintings capture the spirit and courage of Jovita as well as the natural beauty of the desert and campo landscapes depicted here. The text does not shy away from tough historical events, such as death of family members or Jovita's torture and capture, but it focuses on Jovita's persistence and passion for being a soldier. Salazar notes her personal connection to relative Jovita in a closing note, which provides more information on Jovita's life after the war. —*Stephanie Cohen*

Pitch Perfect and Persistent! The Musical Debut of Amy Cheney Beach.

By Caitlin DeLems. Illus. by Alison Jay.

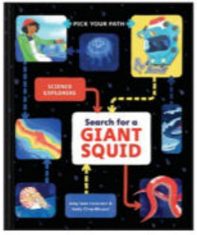
Mar. 2023. 40p. Astra/Calkins Creek, $18.99 (9781662680083). Gr. 2–4. 789.8.

This biography tells the history of Amy Cheney Beach, a composer and pianist in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who was a pioneer for women in music. Going from her humble farm beginnings in New Hampshire as a musical child prodigy to her education in Boston to her debut at the Boston Music Hall at age 16, the story explores a girl pursuing the profession of music at a time it wasn't considered "proper." But when her Aunt Franc convinces her mother to let her touch the piano, it is like a dam of talent is unleashed. Paired with Jay's vibrant illustrations, with a cracked-paint-like texture that pops off the page like paintings of the period, this lively tale will introduce young readers to a new and important historical figure who—in ways such as playing by ear or memory to linking colors with sounds—proves a truly remarkable person. This charming introduction to Beach's life and career is explored in further historical detail in the extensive back matter. —*Stephanie Cohen*

Search for a Giant Squid: Pick Your Path.

By Amy Seto Forrester. Illus. by Andy Chou Musser.

Apr. 2023. 96p. Chronicle, $14.99 (9781797213934). Gr. 2–5. 594.58.



Sibling creators Forrester (a youth services librarian) and Musser have fashioned a unique early reader that combines elements of narrative nonfiction, graphic novels, and choose-your-own-path adventures to introduce the giant squid and its habitat. Following a general introduction to squid morphology, research-expedition protocols, equipment, and team members (a wonderfully diverse crew comprising many races and abilities), readers are asked to select a pilot, a submersible, and a dive site. From there, they are directed to various pages that play out their choices. Each path contains a series of difficulties (some requiring additional choices), a discovery (shipwreck, whale fall, brine pool), a sighting of at least one squid species, and an invitation to try again for those who don't find this elusive cephalopod. The full-color cartoon artwork includes many standard nonfiction elements (labeled cutaway drawings, charts, maps, depictions of ocean creatures) as well as comic conventions (speech bubbles, panel art). Many scenes employ a dark-blue background that nicely sets off the brightly colored underwater sights. Immensely engaging, this reader packs an informational punch. And if flipping pages doesn't suit a reader's learning style, reading cover to cover will still reward young learners with many fascinating details. Generous back matter is appended to this outstanding STEM offering. —*Kay Weisman*

Young

Baba's Gift: A Persian Father's Love of Family.

By Ariana Shaheen Amini and Christina Maheen Amini. Illus. by Elaheh Taherian.

Feb. 2023. 32p. Sasquatch/Little Bigfoot, $18.99 (9781632173232). Gr. 1–3. 305.891.

Baba's Gift is a loving tribute by the authors to their father, Baba, that adds a welcome voice to picture books about immigrant experiences. At the heart of the narrative is the carpet that Baba brought with him when he left Iran as a young man. Unlike the flying Persian carpets in folklore, this one stays put while the six sisters and their father trace his memories in its designs. The reader, too, gets to travel back to Iran, where Baba had dreams inspired by U.S. movies, only to later arrive in an America where he knew no one. His journey is the bittersweet one of

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Carte Blanche

Yellow Means Hope

Michael Cart is the author of *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism. 4th edition.* (ALA Editions, 2022).

Ukrainian artist Oleksandr Shatokhin's wordless picture book, *Yellow Butterfly*, finds a young girl trudging through a bleak, black-and-white, war-torn landscape when she encounters a yellow butterfly, which symbolizes light and hope. She follows it as the number of butterflies grows and collectively begins to remove the stuff of war as the clouds lift and blue sky emerges. There is then an eruption of butterflies as yellow fills the page and the girl and her companions marvel at it. In my starred review I observed that that moving story by Shatokhin—who, as we approach the one-year mark of the start of Russia's invasion, remains in Ukraine—is both timely and timeless, evoking war and its aftermath, with his expressionist illustrations offering a further leavening of emotion to this ultimately hopeful story. I had the good fortune of interviewing Shatokhin, with the assistance of a translator, recently. Here is our conversation:

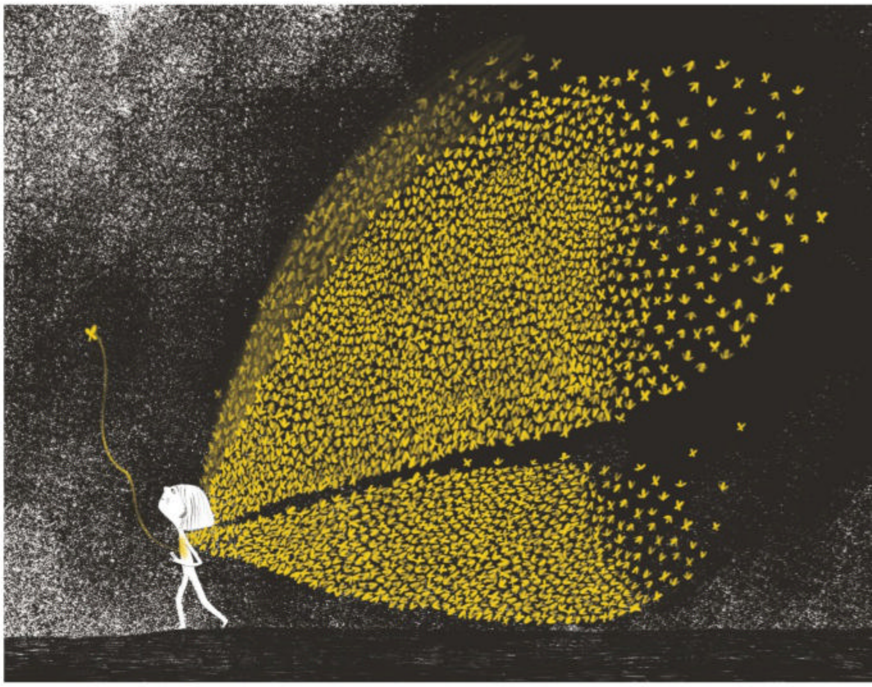
Cart: *How did* Yellow Butterfly *begin for you?*
Shatokhin: It all started with an illustration of a girl against barbed wire. But there was no finished story or final idea of what the story should be like. There was a clear understanding that it should be a book, a quiet book. The full-scale war made the story's outlines clear, and everything fell into place. I wanted to tell a story about what I felt, saw, and heard during those months of war.

Cart: *Why did you choose to present your material in the form of a picture book. And why a wordless one?*
Shatokhin: The format of an illustrated book was exactly what I wanted to use because I know how to do it and it is a perfect way to convey an idea or things I want to say. It is easier for me to express emotions and experiences not through words but with the help of illustrations. This is a wordless book because our reality is already way too clear even without words. And sometimes you can't find the right words to describe everything going on around or inside you. There are so many stories of people living through the war, and in reading the wordless book, everyone can tell a story in their own, different way. In that way, there will be a greater connection with the book, and the story will feel like yours.

Cart: *What was the biggest challenge you faced creating the book? It appeals to both children and adults; did you have a specific audience in mind? And why did you choose yellow butterflies to represent hope?*
Shatokhin: I didn't have fear; I was rather anxious that I might not have time to finish the book, for obvious reasons. But I was determined to do it, so I drew a lot on a daily basis. The very idea was to make a book without age limits so that everyone could understand and feel it. The image of yellow butterflies came up spontaneously; it was a decision based purely on emotions. I saw it as an image of freedom and life. In my view, yellow represents light and inner strength. Currently, the image of light has become relevant, with Russians trying to destroy our energy system and leaving Ukrainians without electricity. It's horrendous, but we have these glowing butterflies—they are inside us, and once they huddle, they become a real, invincible force.

Cart: *Are you hopeful?*
Shatokhin: Not only am I hopeful, I'm also convinced we will win, rebuild everything, and live on! Strong and united as never before.

Cart: *What do you hope readers will take away from your book? And what impact has the war had on your work as an artist?*
Shatokhin: I hope readers find exactly the faith and belief in victory, life, light, and blue-and-yellow sky. After the full-scale invasion, I have drawn lots of war and anti-war posters and provided access to them. I participated in anti-war exhibitions organized by *pictoric*, an online venue, available on Instagram, where artists are sharing their work and protesting the invasion. It's a very strong and united community of illustrators working so that more people can see and hear about this horrible war. I drew everything I was asked to make my small contribution to the fight against the enemy. And I have continued and will continue to draw books, because I can't do without them; as long as I can, I will draw . . . no matter what.



Continued from p.48

a successful immigrant who left part of his heart in a distant land. He left behind a loving mother and extended family and made a new one in America. Collaged illustrations in a crisp, vibrant palette add a cheeriness that embodies the love between father and daughters. A second parent is conspicuously absent and may raise questions among attentive young readers. —*Amina Chaudhri*

It Is Time: The Life of a Caterpillar.

By Lizzy Rockwell. Illus. by the author.

May 2023. 32p. Holiday, $15.99 (9780823450794). PreS–Gr. 2. 595.7813.

A caterpillar emerges from a small egg and munches on a leaf. Over 12 days, she repeatedly outgrows her skin, which splits and sloughs off several times. When a bird threatens her, she rears up, scaring it away. She sheds her skin one last time, becoming a pupa attached to a stem. Two weeks later, a butterfly emerges, legs first, and unfolds its wings. A child nearby calls to her, "Fly, Butterfly!" And she does. An appended double-page spread clarifies the life cycle process by showing the stages of transformation and telling how long they last. Rockwell's attractive illustrations, "created with watercolor washes and digital tools," offer close-up views of the action. Combining the large format of picture books with the brief words, large type, and short sentences (two to six words), the book is intended for beginning readers. Fortunately, like many other books in the I Like to Read series, it is also highly accessible to preschoolers when read aloud. A clearly written, informative introduction to the wondrous life cycle of the black swallowtail butterfly. —*Carolyn Phelan*

No Horses in the House! The Audacious Life of Artist Rosa Bonheur.

By Mireille Messier. Illus. by Anna Bron.

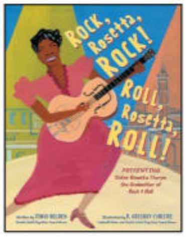
Mar. 2023. 32p. Orca, $21.95 (9781459833524). Gr. 1–3. 759.4.

Readers will revel in the lifelike animal paintings featured in this biography of Rosa Bonheur, the tenacious Parisienne who didn't take "non" for an answer when told that art wasn't for girls. At first we find young Rosa battling her family's restrictions that confine her to pursuits "proper" for a young lady, but eventually Rosa is allowed to study art alongside her brothers. After a visit to the horse market, she covers her home with pictures of horses but is told the market isn't a place for her. She prevails there, too, and after being refused the right to wear pants, she gets police permission to do so. The artwork here sprawls beautifully across spreads, showing, in sepia-toned greens, oranges, blues, and browns, a tiny but confident Rosa surrounded by naysayers as well as her beloved animals, potential creations swirling around the scenes as they pour from her mind. Pair this with a differently styled book that portrays another unstoppable artist: Matthew Burgess' *Drawing on Walls: A Story of Keith Haring* (2020). —*Henrietta Verma*

★ Rock, Rosetta, Rock! Roll, Rosetta, Roll! Presenting Sister Rosetta Tharpe, the Godmother of Rock & Roll.

By Tonya Bolden. Illus. by Christie R. Gregory.

Feb. 2023. 40p. Harper, $18.99 (9780062994387). PreS–Gr. 3. 782.254.



A little girl, a big instrument, and plenty of determination as she grows to meet musical challenges are portrayed through a stellar combination of foot-stomping prose and bold illustrations in this picture-book biography of rock-and-roll pioneer Sister Rosetta Tharpe. Depicting the icon in dresses of pastels and lace, puffy shouldered, with her guitar's round contours set against backgrounds of rounded arcades and scallops, Coretta Scott King Honoree Gregory visually emphasizes the fact that Tharpe's accomplishments were as a female forebear to a musical genre typically associated with men. Yet this child growing up in the early part of the twentieth century with "Music in your air, / in your hair, / in your bones . . ." emerged as an inspiration to some of the most iconic early rock sensations—Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Elvis, Johnny Cash. Bolden keeps the music foremost in readers' minds as she tracks Tharpe's life spent singing in fields, churches, and concert halls, a chorus of "Rock, Rosetta, rock! Roll, Rosetta, roll!" following her. A time line and author's notes fill out the story for curious and inspired older readers, who might even be driven to visit the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, where Tharpe is enshrined as an "Early Influence." Terrific for all collections that want to encourage the musically inclined and highlight innovative pioneers. —*Karen Cruze*

A Star Explodes: The Story of Supernova 1054.

By James Gladstone. Illus. by Yaara Eshet.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Owlkids, $18.95 (9781771474986). Gr. 1–3. 523.8.

Connections with ancient sky-gazers, astronomy facts, and attractive visuals combine here in an accessible introduction to supernovas. Gladstone takes readers to 1054 China, when, after thousands of years "on a luminous journey," the light from an exploding star appears in the morning sky. Members of the imperial court gather to watch, and an (unnamed) astronomer's daughter dubs the newcomer "the guest star." Moving forward to today, readers reencounter the guest, parts of which live on as the Crab Nebula, with related science covered in a just-detailed-enough exploration. Along with engagingly presented science details and an attractive time line, a highlight of this work is the feeling of camaraderie it promises to generate in readers, who will meet a relatable, awestruck child gazing at the sky just like they do; dreamy yellows, blues, and other soft colors featured in the science and fictionalized portions' illustrations, which appear computer generated, are another draw. Helpful back matter (though no notes or further reading) will bolster the facts, but extra explanations from adults might be needed. A worthy, artful science purchase. —*Henrietta Verma*

Supermoms! Animal Heroes.

By Heather Lang and Jamie Harper. Illus. by Jamie Harper.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536217971). PreS–Gr. 2. 591.

Lang introduces animal mothers who go above and beyond in raising their progeny. Some build safe homes (strawberry poison frogs find separate pools for each youngster so they don't eat each other), others are great providers (denned polar bears feed their young for eight months), a few utilize unusual transport (alligators carry babies in their mouths), still others excel at protection (giraffe mothers kick), and many are excellent educators (river otters teach their young to swim). Harper's playful, comics-style artwork employs traditional and digital collage. The opening spread poses these moms together as if waiting to soar (à la Superman) off the page. Speech balloons permit these cheeky children and moms to remark about the scenes depicted, and formal text is kept minimal, allowing the colorful art and humorous commentary to take center stage, as when female elephants (allomothers) form a circle ("Bums together, ladies!") around a young calf ("Is this really necessary?"). Appended with further information and resources, this will be popular with browsers and intriguing for primary science units. —*Kay Weisman*

A Tulip in Winter: A Story about Folk Artist Maud Lewis.

By Kathy Stinson. Illus. by Lauren Soloy.

Mar. 2023. 44p. Greystone Kids, $18.95 (9781771649513). Gr. 1–3. 709.2.

The overflowing-with-life folk art of self-taught Nova Scotian artist Maud Lewis (1903–70) is lovingly emulated here, complementing the story of Lewis' life as a disabled woman who struggled with poverty—but who never stopped covering every available surface with childlike paintings. Lewis had a condition that led to debilitating rheumatoid arthritis as an adult, and when, as a child, she could no longer play piano, her mother encouraged her to try holding a paintbrush. Maud's creativity flowed from there. "As Maud grew up, colour flowed through her days," writes Stinson, and even as an adult, Maud painted on any surface and included any elements she wanted: "If there is snow on the ground, mountaintops are not green—except in Maud's paintings." Anyone who's faced a challenge—that's everyone!—will appreciate Maud's tenacity and Soloy's lively art that bursts with color. The end of Lewis' life is covered, too, with Stinson describing how the artist fit in a child's coffin, a fact epitomizing the book's inherent respect for young readers' ability to handle tough details. A great choice for biography and art shelves. —*Henrietta Verma*

New
SERIES NONFICTION SHOWCASE

Biographies of Diverse Heroes Series. Crabtree/Seedlings. K–Gr. 3. (7 titles)

John Lewis. By Stephanie Gaston. 2022. 24p. illus. paper, $8.95 (9781039661929); lib. ed., $27.93 (9781039659971); e-book, $24 (9781039669888). 323.4.
Kamala Harris. By Stephanie Gaston. 2022. 24p. illus. paper, $8.95 (9781039661967); lib. ed., $27.93 (9781039660014); e-book, $24 (9781039669925). 353.03.
Ketanji Brown Jackson. By Stephanie Gaston. 2022. 24p. illus. paper, $8.95 (9781039687929); lib. ed., $27.93 (9781039687936); e-book, $24 (9781039687943). 347.
Lin-Manuel Miranda. By Stephanie Gaston. 2022. 24p. illus. paper, $8.95 (9781039661950); lib. ed., $27.93 (9781039660007); e-book, $24 (9781039669918). 782.

There's a role model for everyone in the Biographies of Diverse Heroes series. From politicians to creatives, this series digs into the backgrounds and accomplishments of an inspiring array of notable individuals. Each title is prefaced by a guide for educators and caregivers featuring before- and after-reading questions to ponder with young readers. Clean layouts make for an undistracted reading experience, characterized by pages filled with a large photo and one to two sentences of direct text. In *John Lewis*, readers will meet this human-rights activist and learn about his background as a congressman and lawmaker. *Kamala Harris* introduces the current vice president, explaining how she was inspired to be an activist at a young age and what led to her current leadership position. *Ketanji Brown Jackson* describes Jackson's path to the U.S. Supreme Court, from her childhood in Miami, Florida, to her historic judicial nomination as the first Black woman to serve on the country's highest court. *Lin-Manuel Miranda* covers the Puerto Rican playwright, composer, and actor's Broadway successes and training in the arts. Simplified tables of contents, glossaries, and indexes help familiarize young learners with the nonfiction format, and a quote from the featured subject brings each biography to a close. A solid series that proudly celebrates diversity in our world. *—Aurora Dominguez*

Egyptian Mythology Series. ABDO/Kids Core. Gr. 3–6. (8 titles)

Anubis. By Allan Morey. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $34.22 (9781532198656). 932.01.
Hathor. By Heather C. Hudak. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $34.22 (9781532198663). 932.01.
Horus. By Alyssa Krekelberg. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $34.22 (9781532198670). 932.01.
Isis. By Alyssa Krekelberg. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $34.22 (9781532198687). 932.01.

The Egyptian Mythology series examines ancient Egypt's pantheon of gods and goddesses. A professor of Egyptology serves as a content consultant for each volume, which is divided into three short chapters, attractively illustrated with photos of Egyptian artwork and artifacts; topical text boxes, primary source quotes, critical-thinking questions, and the occasional infographic are also incorporated. Smoothly written, these texts give readers a clear picture of the roles a god or goddess played in mythology and ancient Egyptian society, while pointing out the changing nature of myths. The jackal-headed god of embalming is the focus of *Anubis,* which describes his Charon-like job of guiding the souls of the dead to the afterlife. *Hathor* introduces the much-adored, cow-headed "Mother of Mothers," whose divine purview overlapped greatly with that of Isis. In *Horus,* readers meet the popular and powerful falcon-headed god and learn of his epic battle with the god Seth. *Isis* spotlights the famous goddess of fertility, motherhood, and healing, offering background on her position as Osiris' wife. In each book, a double-page, pictorial spread entitled "Legendary Facts" follows the main text, summarizing key points about the featured deity. Teachers will appreciate the online content tied to each title, which includes downloadable activities and kid-friendly websites. A well-executed series that both educators and kids will enjoy. *—Julia Smith*

How It Happened! Union Square Kids. Gr. 4–8. (2 titles)

How It Happened! Gum: The Cool Stories and Facts Behind Every Chew. By Paige Towler. Illus. by Dan Sipple. Apr. 2023. 192p. $18.99 (9781454944980). 664.
How It Happened! Sneakers: The Cool Stories and Facts Behind Every Pair. By Stephanie Warren Drimmer. Illus. by Dan Sipple. Apr. 2023. 192p. $18.99 (9781454944966). 685.3.

The How It Happened! series provides energetic, upbeat histories of everyday items that should be familiar to most kids. Pages are filled with eye-catching graphics, sidebars, photos, illustrations, and accessible text peppered with numerous exclamation points. Despite having different authors, both books feature the same bouncy style, inviting layout, and overall format, including four sections ("How It All Started," "How It Got Off the Ground," "How It Took Over the World," future applications) and brief chapters that cover technical details wrapped within social context and historic perspective. *Gum* explains that ancient people, including Neanderthals, enjoyed chomping on natural saps and resins, and traces the varieties of gum developed around the world using local ingredients and flavors. This title also explores chewing gum's multiple applications through time, from freshening breath to delivering medicine to helping athletes concentrate. *Sneakers* wanders a bit, starting out with the history of rubber before detailing the famous rivalry between Adidas and Puma, celebrity endorsements, and specialized applications (aerobics, skate boarding, streetball, Hip Hop). Both selections are broad in scope, touching on popular culture, familiar advertising slogans, and ways their products were initially promoted to women. Back matter includes detailed time lines, a glossary, and related activities—but (alas) no notes or bibliographies. Despite the lack of references, these attention-getting titles will appeal to browsers and enrich STEAM collections. *—Kathleen McBroom*

Journey into Space Series. Bellwether/Blastoff! Missions. K–Gr. 3. (6 titles)

The Asteroid Belt. By Betsy Rathburn. Illus. by Natalya Karpova. 2022. 24p., lib. ed., $26.95 (9781644876534). 523.44.
The Dwarf Planets. By Betsy Rathburn. Illus. by Natalya Karpova. 2022. 24p. lib. ed., $26.95 (9781644876541). 523.4.
Moons. By Harriet Loy. Illus. by Natalya Karpova. 2022. 24p. lib. ed., $26.95 (9781644876565). 523.9.
The Outer Planets. By Christina Leaf. Illus. by Natalya Karpova. 2022. 24p. lib. ed., $26.95 (9781644876572). 523.4.

Would you like to go on an educational space adventure? Yes, *you*! In engaging second-person narratives, the Journey into Space series takes to the stars, giving Magic School Bus–style lessons on the cosmos. Each title begins with "Mission Goals" to prepare youngsters for their reading experience. Kids will gravitate to the colorful cartoon art, which fills double-page spreads that feature simple text (a few short sentences per page), bold labels identifying objects in the illustrations, and fun facts provided by Blastoff Jimmy. Each volume concludes with an infographic list of its featured space objects or planets, with some including sight-word pronunciations to further build on skills for beginning readers. *Asteroid Belt* takes readers from a museum into an imagination-fueled exploration of an asteroid belt just beyond Mars, examining the composition and shapes of different types of asteroids. *The Dwarf Planets* inspects Pluto and other dwarf planets within the Milky Way solar system as well as their defining features (e.g., craters and planetary shape). Readers will swoon over the fascinating facts in *Moons*, which discusses the surprising number of moons in our solar system and their characteristics. *The Outer Planets* ventures beyond the asteroid belt to visit the gas and ice giants. Back matter includes suggested reading, kid-friendly online resources, and "Beyond the Mission" discussion questions. An inviting series that makes learning an adventure. —*Kelly Ferreira*

A Kids Book about Pets Series. A Kids Book About. K–Gr. 3. (3 titles)

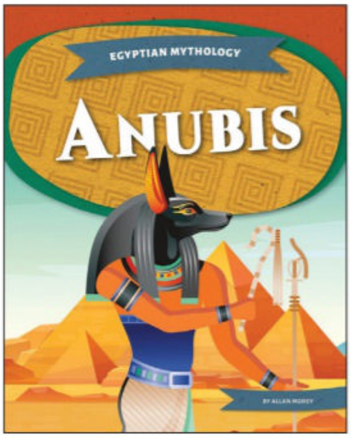
A Kids Book about Adopting a Pet. By The Dodo. 2022. 64p. illus. $19.95 (9781953955869). 636.0887.
A Kids Book about Caring for a Pet. By The Dodo. 2022. 64p. illus. $19.95 (9781953955883). 636.0887.
A Kids Book about Saying Goodbye to a Pet. By The Dodo. 2022. 64p. illus. $19.95 (9781953955906). 636.0887.

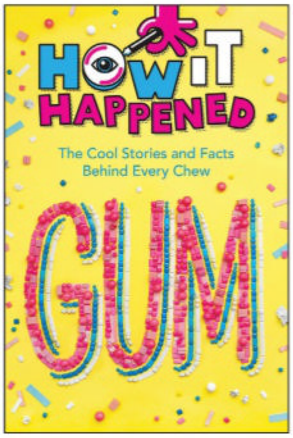
The titles in the A Kids Book about Pets series, fittingly authored by animal-oriented media organization The Dodo, cover the full relationship cycle between pet and owner: adopting, caretaking, and saying goodbye. The books are prefaced with the recommendation that they be "read together, grownup and kid," so while the subject matter and tone generally apply to younger children, many of the ideas may require additional explanation. *Adopting a Pet* walks kids through the pros and cons of adoption, the steps required to give a pet a loving home, and the adjustment period that follows. *Caring for a Pet* provides 12 pointers for keeping a pet safe and healthy, while *Saying Goodbye to a Pet* gives shape to common feelings surrounding death and suggests ways of coping after losing a pet. With the exception of the intros and outros, the text is minimal, setting only a few spare lines of conversational, direct address on each page. In spite of the accessible form, the lack of back matter and presence of abstract concepts (love, death) and advanced vocab (*euthanasia, vaccines, empathy*) reinforce the point that these books are intended for grownups talking to children. The more-adult feel is supported by the design's bold, modern-art style, with black text set on solid color fills, only punctuated by the occasional bit of art. —*Ronny Khuri*

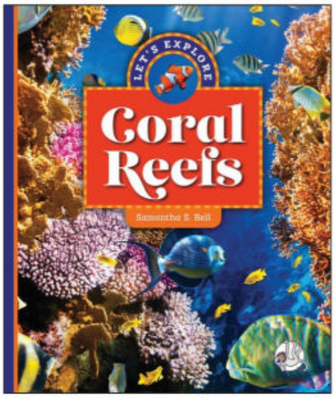
Let's Explore Ecosystems Series. The Child's World/Wonder. Gr. 2–4. (12 titles)

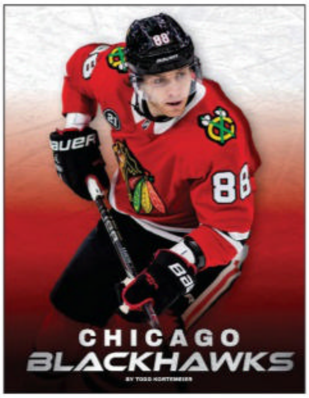
Let's Explore Coral Reefs. By Samantha S. Bell. 2022. 24p. illus. lib. ed., $31.36 (9781503857940); e-book, $49.93 (9781503861657). Gr. 3–5. 577.
Let's Explore Deserts. By Tammy Gagne. 2022. 24p. illus. lib. ed., $31.36 (9781503857971); e-book, $49.93 (9781503861664). 577.
Let's Explore Forests. By Samantha S. Bell. 2022. 24p. illus. lib. ed., $31.36 (9781503857957); e-book, $49.93 (9781503861671). 577.
Let's Explore Mountains. By Heather C. Hudak. 2022. 24p. illus. lib. ed., $31.36 (9781503858046); e-book, $49.93 (9781503861633). 577.

As the series title suggests, Let's Explore Ecosystems introduces elementary readers to a range of ecosystems around the world. Divided into three sections, each volume opens with a few paragraphs that explain the unique features that make up the ecosystem. The second and longest section profiles seven ecosystem inhabitants, including plants, mammals, birds, insects, and reptiles. The shorter third section is a statement on ways humans can protect the ecosystem. *Let's Explore Coral Reefs* focuses on the symbiotic relationships between corals and surrounding plants and animals, as they provide one another with safety, food, and other benefits. *Let's Explore Deserts* not only looks at the earth's hottest deserts, like the Sahara, but also at some of its coldest, found in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. *Let's Explore Forests* deviates from a geographic approach to highlight layers of a forest, from its floor to its tree-top canopy. *Let's Explore Mountains* emphasizes plant and animal adaptations to this extreme ecosystem, such as the bighorn sheep's hooves, which help it cling to rocky ledges. Adding to the descriptions are full-page, eye-catching photographs of the ecosystem's land formations, plants, and animals as well as a related infographic and numerous sidebars with more fun facts. Finally, a concluding craft lets students synthesize the ecosystem concepts with hands-on engagement. —*Angela Leeper*









NHL Teams Series. Press Box. Gr. 3–6. (12 titles)

Chicago Blackhawks. By Todd Kortemeier. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $31.35 (9781634944892). 796.
Minnesota Wild. By Chrös McDougall. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $31.35 (9781634944922). 796.
Toronto Maple Leafs. By Luke Hanlon. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $31.35 (9781634944984). 796.
Vegas Golden Knights. By Harold P. Cain. 2022. 32p. illus. lib. ed., $31.35 (9781634944991). 796.

The colorful books in the NHL Teams series offer introductions to the histories of individual franchises within the National Hockey League. Each author is a sportswriter living in the featured team's city, and the texts are both informative and accessible to middle-grade readers. Sidebars and an appended "Quick Stats" page present related facts. The illustrations include many color photos and, for older teams, black-and-white shots as well. Each book opens with a six-page chapter reporting on a noteworthy game in the team's history. The remaining chapters trace the franchise's story from its beginnings to recent times, and one player is featured within a two-page "Superstar Profile." In *Chicago Blackhawks*, Kortemeier reports on the exciting sixth game in the 2013 Stanley Cup Final series, which culminated in the Blackhawks' second Stanley Cup win within four years. McDougall opens *Minnesota Wild* by recalling Kirill Kaprizov's dramatic, game-winning goal in overtime during his first NHL game. In *Toronto Maple Leafs*, Harlon recounts Auston Matthews' NHL debut, during which the rookie scored four goals for the Maple Leafs. *Vegas Golden Knights* begins with Cain's account of the game in which the Golden Knights clinched a playoff spot in their first year as an NHL expansion team. An attractive source of basic historical information on NHL teams. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Youth Fiction

Older Readers

Blitzkrieg.

By Brian Falkner.

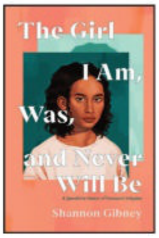
2023. 368p. Scholastic, paper, $12.99 (9781338857825). Gr. 9–12.

Joe St. George’s world is turned upside down as he witnesses the rise of Nazi Germany. When his diplomat father is arrested and taken away, Joe and his mother are left alone and afraid. After receiving a cryptic message, they flee Germany but are separated as they narrowly avoid capture. In London, Joe searches for his mother while navigating the debris-filled streets and trying to avoid German spies. After Joe is recruited by MI5 for a perilous special mission that could help end the war, he must decide how far he will go to find his family. Falkner returns with another historical thriller set against the backdrop of WWII and inspired by actual events. Biography-like excerpts about Joe are found before several chapters, bringing the character to life. Readers will be pulled in by the action and adventure of Joe’s missions, which also pack an emotional punch as he loses friends to the war. A sequel is hinted at by another dangerous mission that awaits Joe at the end. *—Savannah Patterson*

★ The Girl I Am, Was, and Never Will Be: A Speculative Memoir of Transracial Adoption.

By Shannon Gibney.

2023. 256p. Dutton, $18.99 (9780593111994). Gr. 9–12.



Transracial author Gibney guides readers through the time line of her youth as she makes sense of her adoption, birth parents, and identity. Using the present tense, Gibney describes her youth as a mixed-Black girl being brought up by a white family in Ann Arbor, Michigan, during the 1980s. Despite the unending love her adoptive mother provides, Gibney can’t help but acknowledge the dissimilarities between herself and her family. Fast-forward to her college years: Gibney builds a fervent desire to connect with her blood relatives. What she discovers are mixed reviews of her Black birth father (who has passed away) and jumbled emotions toward her birth mother, who is white and recovering from alcoholism. Gibney eschews the “tools of mainstream literary fiction,” blending her lived experiences as the adopted Shannon with fictionalized scenes where she appears as Erin Powers, the name given to her at birth. The inclusion of personal photos and letters allows Gibney to further reimagine her story in order to appreciate her past, present, and future while educating readers on the adoption process—and the fallacies and epistemological violence perpetrated by the “literature of adoption.” Readers will praise the raw honesty and insight into this lovingly crafted memoir. Recommend to admirers of Echo Brown’s *Black Girl Unlimited* (2020). *—Beronica Garcia*

If I Can Give You That.

By Michael Gray Bulla.

Feb. 2023. 320p. HarperCollins/Quill Tree, $17.99 (9780063091702). Gr. 9–12.

High-school senior Gael has a lot on his plate: he’s secretly transgender and doesn’t know if he’s gay or straight. Furthermore, his mother is seriously depressed and divorced from his father. Now, to Gael’s fury, the man wants to come back home and insinuate himself into their lives. Meanwhile, Gael, who is white, has met a wonderful Black biracial boy named Declan. The two boys become friends, and it’s obvious to everyone but Gael that queer Declan is seriously smitten with him. Their relationship remains agreeable until Declan kisses Gael, who freaks out, causing things to become seriously weird. After a great deal of agonizing, Gael reunites with Declan, but then, just as Gael asks to kiss Declan, Gael learns that his mom has attempted suicide—and, yes, he blames himself and the relationship for it. Trans man and first-time author Bulla has written a fine, character-driven novel with strong trans representation, and if Gael’s somewhat-repetitive narrative becomes a bit tiresome, he remains a highly empathetic character. Readers will wish him and Declan much happiness. *—Michael Cart*

Iron Wolf.

By Siri Pettersen. Tr. by Tara Chace.

Feb. 2023. 400p. Arctis, $20 (9781646900152). Gr. 10–12.

Nineteen-year-old Juva comes from a long line of blood readers, who claim to be able to foretell the future but are actually charlatans. Wanting nothing to do with the family business, Juva hunts wolves instead. But her life is disrupted when powerful immortal beings, called the vardari, threaten the blood readers at the same time that whispers begin about the return of the devil. As a child, Juva met that devil—a being called the iron wolf—and she has lived in fear ever since. Pettersen’s YA fantasy is the first in a trilogy based on Norse mythology. Written from three perspectives, the book focuses on the enigmatic vardari Nafraim, Rugen (a former lover stricken with wolfsickness), and Juva as she journeys to discovering who she is and what really happened years ago. The numerous story threads and complicated mythology come together, and the book’s measured pace picks up near the halfway point. Juva is a compelling and relatable protagonist, and the world Pettersen creates will appeal to fans of vampire and werewolf lore. *—Marija Lukic*

Last Sunrise in Eterna.

By Amparo Ortiz.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Page Street, $18.99 (9781645676140). Gr. 9–12.

Goth girl Sevim Burgos helps her mother make ends meet by engaging in a lucrative but shady business—selling elf corpses to a university professor. These bodies are the product of an elf war that has spilled onto Puerto Rico from the nearby island of Eterna. When her employer demands that Sevim bring him the body of one of the Iron Staff clan, the 17-year-old is pulled into the orbit of Eterna’s royal family and a carefully laid trap. Believing she is about to retrieve the body of Prince Aro, Sevim instead finds herself tricked into becoming a participant in The Exchange—a week of tests and competitions spent on Eterna. If Sevim doesn’t comply (and win the competitions), her mother will be killed. Ortiz (*Blazewrath Games,* 2020) creates a unique setting that mixes the pedestrian (Burger King, Krispy Kreme, Instagram) with ethereal fantasy. Readers will enjoy the bravery of confident, edgy Sevim and be invested in her trials on Eterna—as well as the family secrets she uncovers there. A dream-fueled saga that mixes magic with nightmares. *—Aurora Dominguez*

My Flawless Life.

By Yvonne Woon.

Feb. 2023. 352p. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $17.99 (9780063008694). Gr. 9–12.

After a costly scandal involving her ex-senator father, Hana’s once-flawless life atop the social scene of uber-elite St. Francis High crashed down. Now she resides on the fringes, occasionally dipping back in to “fix” problems (making sure secrets stay buried, managing reputations, pulling strings) in exchange for money. When she’s contacted by a mysterious client offering a paycheck she can’t refuse, Hana is tasked with delving into the underbelly of her community to expose a conspiracy that could rip her school—and what remains of her life—apart. Woon fuses a well-trod story depicting the secret lives of elite high-school teenagers with a hardboiled detective tale. The result is a hugely refreshing read. Full of twists and double-crosses, the story never settles into predictability. Even better is the strong voice of Hana, an unreliable narrator hiding the pain of her father’s crime under a cool mercenary verve. Add to that a possible love interest in the form of James, school newspaper reporter turned Hana’s “girl Friday,” and this book has everything a fan of YA mystery could want. *—Reinhardt Suarez*

★ Planning Perfect.

By Haley Neil.

Feb. 2023. 352p. Bloomsbury YA, $17.99 (9781547607495). Gr. 8–11.

Felicity thinks that her mom, Hannah, has always done things in the wrong order: she sold an app, conceived Felicity via sperm donor, and now spends her days ghostwriting superhero novelizations, sleeping in, and dyeing her hair bright colors. Felicity, by contrast, is organized and overinvolved, even though extreme stress landed her in the hospital over midterms. When Hannah gets engaged, Felicity plans to throw her a perfect wedding—one that will also please Felicity's traditional Jewish Bubbe *and* land Felicity an internship at a major event-planning company. When Nancy, Felicity's friend from an LGBTQ seminar, offers her family's apple orchard as a venue, friendship blooms into something more. But Felicity, who is biromantic and asexual, has no idea what an actual relationship would look like for her or if she could handle the expectations any potential partner might have. Felicity's mind isn't an easy place to be: her anxiety can be overwhelming, and she doesn't always get the help she needs. But her developing relationship with Nancy rings profoundly true, and this is a tender, lovingly depicted capture of self-discovery and dating while asexual—one that is infrequently portrayed for readers of any age. For that reason alone, stock up. —*Maggie Reagan*

PLANNING
Perfect
HALEY NEIL

The Pledge.

By Cale Dietrich.

Feb. 2023. 304p. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250186973). Gr. 9–12.

When Sam was in high school, he ended a bloody murder spree by killing the killer—and began his new life as an anxious, traumatized survivor. Estranged from his ex-boyfriend, who experienced the murders with him, and his mother, who capitalized on the worst thing that ever happened to him to write a best-seller about the Lake Priest Massacre, Sam takes a leap and joins a fraternity when he goes to college, hoping to put the past behind him and start making friends again. A cute older boy takes an interest in Sam, and, for a minute, it seems like the biggest drama in college is going to be infighting between his frat brothers about who is dating whom. Then people close to Sam start getting murdered again. With a little romance, a little bro talk, and a little bloody murder, this fast-moving slasher will appeal to fans of the Scream franchise and those with an interest in the ethics of true-crime fandom. —*Beth McIntyre*

Revelle.

By Lyssa Mia Smith.

Feb. 2023. 464p. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $18.99 (9780063239265). Gr. 10–12.

Magical trapeze artist Luxe Revelle is part of a family that uses magic to make illusions on the magical island of Charmant, off the coast of New York. Jamison Port is an orphan who, though he has no magic of his own, has a few magical friends. On opening night at the Big Tent on Charmant, booze and sin are supposed to flow free, but Prohibition is affecting even the magical families. In a bid to seduce a bootlegger so the family can remain in business, Luxe accidentally bewitches Jamison, mistaking him for the mayor's son. As she begins to feel something for Jamison, she realizes her mistake and must scramble to seduce her real mark. But now that true feelings are complicating things, can Luxe still follow through for her family's sake? And how much will it cost her if she does? The lush, glittering descriptions of this *Moulin Rouge!*–based fantasy will hook readers from the very first page. Debut author Smith is one to watch. —*Stacey Comfort*

Stars and Smoke.

By Marie Lu.

Mar. 2023. 336p. Roaring Brook, $19.99 (9781250852816). Gr. 9–12.

To the world, Winter Young has everything. A Chinese American international pop superstar with the voice—and face—of an angel, Winter summons legions of fans wherever he goes. But Winter's mother has grown distant since Winter's elder brother died, and a string of romantic encounters with different men and women never fills the void. Enter the Panacea Group, a freelance intelligence agency. They're hunting Eli Morrison, a criminal mastermind and drug lord, and his 19-year-old daughter, Penelope, is a *major* Winter Young fan. Panacea recruits Winter to help them get close by performing a private concert for Penelope's birthday, but he won't be alone. White teen Sydney Cossette was essentially raised by Panacea, and she's up for a coveted promotion. But this mission means posing as Winter's bodyguard, and Sydney's dismissed him as just a pretty face. But Winter and Sydney both have secrets, and the closer they become, the more they grudgingly respect each other. Winter and Sydney's individual narratives are overall more compelling than their slow-burn romance, but the propulsive, high-stakes plot will hook any spy-novel fan. —*Maggie Reagan*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Just like her boy, Lu's a superstar: the author of the Legend series is a reliable #1 *NYT* best-seller, and this glitzy, high-concept thriller seems poised to join her other titles.

Stateless.

By Elizabeth Wein.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316591249). Gr. 8–12.

Wein's (*Code Name Verity*, 2012) new stand-alone thriller centers on a fictional 1937 European youth air race promoting peace between nations. Twelve pilots fly solo from country to country, dogged by the press and paired with aviation heroes of the Great War who serve as their chaperones. Stella North, 17, an orphaned Russian refugee living in England, represents the UK. The sole woman, she races to prove both her talent and her patriotism. On the very first day of competition, Stella witnesses one pilot force another's plane into the English Channel. Too far away to identify either, she comes to believe that the murderer killed the wrong pilot by mistake—but who is the real target, and why? Tony Roberts, the secretive pilot representing France, is also stateless; feeling a kinship, Stella and Tony collaborate to uncover the saboteur. Dramatic chase scenes in the skies above the Alps and on the streets of Nazi-controlled Hamburg, Germany, climax in a terrifying airborne confrontation over Paris. Throughout, readers feel the tensions that would soon catapult Europe into war. —*Angela Carstensen*

This Time It's Real.

By Ann Liang.

Feb. 2023. 352p. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338827118); e-book, $18.99 (9781338827132). Gr. 9–12.

In Liang's contemporary YA romance, a viral essay leads to fake dating, leads to real love. When Eliza's essay about her boyfriend unexpectedly goes viral, there's just one problem: none of it happened. Not only is the whole story the essay is based on made up but she doesn't even have a boyfriend. When Eliza gets both popularity and a once-in-a-lifetime internship offer based on her essay, she comes up with a solution: a mutually beneficial fake-dating arrangement with Chinese drama celebrity Caz Song, who also happens to go to her school. Caz agrees to go along with her story in exchange for help with his college applications, and so begins a fake romance that increasingly starts to become real. Eliza's family has moved around a lot, and she struggles with finding her place in her international school in Beijing. She also has difficulty trusting people enough to truly engage in a real relationship, especially with a teen idol like Caz. This book will appeal to readers who enjoy fake-dating and celebrity tropes, themes of belonging and identity, and a sweet and emotional love story. —*Marija Lukic*

ANN LIANG
This time it's Real

When You Wish upon a Lantern.

By Gloria Chao.

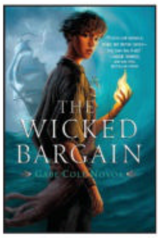
Feb. 2023. 352p. Viking, $18.99 (9780593464359). Gr. 8–12.

Best friends Liya Huang and Kai Jiang have grown distant after an embarrassing incident comes between them, though, privately, neither wants to stop being friends. It suits their families, however, whose businesses in Chicago's Chinatown are locked in a petty feud. Liya tries to distract herself by working at her parents' store, When You Wish Upon a Lantern, and resuming a clandestine service she and her late nǎinai (grandmother) used to do: making wishes that people place in their sky lanterns come true. One wish requires a matchmaking scheme that takes Liya to the Jiang's bakery, happily reuniting her with Kai, who becomes her new partner in wish-granting. Hints of romance thread through this sweet story, which also confronts the starker realities of parental pressure and financial difficulty—the Huangs' business is being threatened with eviction. Nevertheless, Chao keeps the narrative aloft with its buoyant message of making one's own magic. Chapters are narrated from Liya's and Kai's perspectives, and a guide to Mandarin aids readers with words' pronunciations and meanings. A culturally rich, luminous love story. —*Aurora Dominguez*

★ The Wicked Bargain.

By Gabe Cole Novoa.

Feb. 2023. 368p. Random, $18.99 (9780593378014). Gr. 9–12.



In the summer of 1820, 16-year-old Mar León de la Rosa is aboard *La Catalina*, one of the last pirate ships in the Caribbean, when el Diablo comes to collect on the deal Mar's papá struck many years before. Though Mar expends their secret magic ability—controlling fire and ice—the ship still sinks, and the entire crew with it. Miraculously spared, Mar is spotted and rescued by Bas, the charming pirate son of another passing ship. While Mar, aching for freedom and a chance at a normal life, quarrels with the magia inside them, el Diablo returns with another deal: Mar's soul in exchange for their papá's. Transmasculine nonbinary Mar, who uses they/them pronouns, is the magical piratical teen of readers' dreams. Written in Mar's first person with Spanish interspersed, Novoa's story celebrates identities often othered in our world by representing them as ordinary here. A lineup of Latinx characters, gender-fluid demonio, and slow-burning romance beautifully round off this fantasy. The pacing of the novel can't always keep up with the high stakes of the plot, but that's a minor quibble; readers will be hard-pressed to find much fault here as they grapple with Mar's dilemma. —*Mahjabeen Syed*

The Witch and the Vampire.

By Francesca Flores.

Mar. 2023. 368p. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250220516); e-book, $10.99 (9781250220523). Gr. 9–12.

Flores (*Diamond City*, 2020) presents a new twist on the classic fairy tale "Rapunzel," braiding together a sapphic love story, vampires, and vampire-hating witches. The latter group includes Kaye, who is out to avenge her mother's death at the hands of vampire Ava, whom Kaye once thought was a friend. But when the two reunite, Kaye's mission shifts as she becomes concerned with getting Ava to safety, a task complicated by Ava's controlling mother and the girls' growing and mutual interest in each other. While this tale offers only a glimpse into the universe Flores has created, there's a thrumming sense of a world below the surface, making it feel expansive and easy to imagine. Despite its origins in classic fairy tales, this dual-perspective story echoes relevant social issues around prejudice and justice. Readers familiar with queer young adult fantasy will be reminded of *Ash* (2009), Malinda Lo's groundbreaking "Cinderella" retelling, while others will appreciate the similar themes of revenge and royal politics found in Natasha Ngan's *Girls of Paper and Fire* (2018). —*Abby Hargreaves*

Wolfwood.

By Marianna Baer.

Mar. 2023. 384p. Abrams/Amulet, $19.99 (9781419733710). Gr. 10–12.

Indigo, 17-year-old daughter of once-famous artist Zoe Serra, is secretly trying to complete the unfinished paintings in her mother's series, "Wolfwood." Her mother has a contract with an art gallery to show the paintings, but now she says she is unable to finish. As Indigo paints, she is literally caught up in the world of the paintings with their lush jungle of sentient and lethal plants and three sisters who are on a mission. Interspersed throughout Indigo's story is a chilling account of Zoe's past—the original inspiration for the paintings. At one point, Zoe's story begins to bleed into Indigo's experiences, and when Indigo finally recognizes that what she is doing is more perilous than just filling in her mother's sketches, she soldiers on. Indigo is a bright, compassionate, and stubborn individual who is determined to rise out of her current poverty; readers will appreciate her grit. In addition, she is surrounded by large-as-life and colorful characters who support and challenge her in this entirely original story. —*Donna Scanlon*

Young

All Kinds of Special.

By Tammi Sauer. Illus. by Fernando Martin.

May 2023. 40p. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, $18.99 (9781534496033). PreS–Gr. 2.

Mia introduces herself and Mama and then announces that they have moved into a house with a yard and a mango tree. Though she misses her old friends, every day she enjoys checking out the green mangoes on the tree, hoping they will ripen. And one day, a mango turns red and yellow. Slowly, the other green fruits on the tree begin to ripen, too. Mama fixes mango recipes, and Mia eats many mangoes, but they can't keep pace with the tree's abundance. Mama challenges Mia to find a solution, and she does. They invite their new neighbors to come and pick their own mangoes. Soon, their yard is full of people picking fruit, talking, and making new friends. Throughout Mia's inviting first-person narrative, she shares her latest favorite facts, from "We have a house" to "There's no such thing as too many mangoes." With simplified forms and bold colors, the appealing illustrations capture Mia's impatience with the mangoes, her occasional loneliness, and her warm relationship with Mama. A satisfying picture book that reads aloud well. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Ancient Night.

By David Álvarez and David Bowles. Illus. by David Álvarez.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Levine Querido, $16.99 (9781646142514). K–Gr. 3.

In this lovely collaboration rooted in the lore and traditions of Central America and Mexico's indigenous Nahuas, when the actions of rivals Rabbit and Opossum result in the moon losing its light due to the loss of the aguamiel (sacred sap), Opossum must find a way to make it up to the people and animals on Earth. The soothing depictions of Rabbit on the moon, along with Lord Opossum, will draw readers in, as the textured and vibrant flora and fauna light up the moonbeam-soaked pages. Álvarez's lush illustrations—the artist's first that have been published in color—are beautifully complemented by Bowles' shining prose. A concluding note details the history of Mesoamerican creation stories, the original tales of "The Rabbit and the Moon" and "Opposum and the Sun's Fire," and the culture's rich legacy of weaving stories together over time, mirroring the very process that Álvarez and Bowles have executed here. With its gorgeous illustrations and simple, sweet message, this book will delight readers of all ages. —*Stephanie Cohen*

Bears Don't Cry!

By Emma Chichester Clark. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Kane Miller, $14.99 (9781684645145). PreS–Gr. 2.

George, a large brown bear, lives with a mother and her daughter, Clementine, the girl who taught him to read in *Bears Don't Read!* (2015). One day, George decides to visit the library and check out another book. But when the townsfolk see him, they panic. Suddenly the library and shop doors are locked, and many people hide. Stepping on rolling fruit at the outdoor market, the bear hurtles through the air and splashes down into a large fountain. Onlookers laugh, making George feels clumsy, embarrassed, and sad. When Clementine arrives, he begins to cry. She introduces George and reproaches the crowd for hurting his feelings. One by one, the people apologize to him, and then they stay to hear him read aloud. Both the text and the art encourage empathy for the bighearted but vulnerable bear, while suggesting the importance of speaking up for someone in distress. The story unfolds in a smooth-flowing narrative, while the lively illustrations make the most of the contrast between small, feisty Clementine and her large but insecure friend. A heartening picture book. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Billie and Bean at the Beach.

By Julia Hansson. Illus. by the author. Tr. by B. J. Woodstein.

Feb. 2023. 32p. Orca, $21.95 (9781459834415). PreS–Gr. 2.

Billie's on a beach outing with her mom

and her dog, Bean. Others are enjoying the ocean—even Bean—but Billie would rather lie on the sand. Mom wants Billie to go in the water, and though she's hesitant, Billie thinks about how Bean did it and ventures in. But she's stung by a jellyfish ("something really hurts!!") and, upset, returns to staying on shore. That is, until Bean brings her goggles and snorkel, prompting Billie to attempt another dip. This time, she has fun, finding fishes, other creatures, plants, and underwater mysteries—including a memento to take home. First published in Sweden, this translated title's appealing pencil-and-watercolor illustrations nicely contrast bright beach scenes with deep-hued undersea ones, depicting the events and characters with a mix of playful and evocative elements. While the danger of Billie's jellyfish sting is downplayed (they can be quite serious) and what's glowing from her closed palm at the story's end is unclear, the emphasis on trying again after an unpleasant first experience is a useful one. For larger collections. —*Shelle Rosenfeld*

Cinderella—with Dogs!

By Linda Bailey. Illus. by Freya Hartas.

Feb. 2023. 32p. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $18.99 (9781984813824). PreS–Gr. 2.

While the rest of the household is at a ball, Cinderella—white and tatterdemalion—cleans, surrounded by a mix of mischievous cats. If only she had a fairy godmother, she muses, when *poof!*—or rather, *woof!*—her fairy *dog*mother appears in a pink tiara and tutu. At the mention of the ball (what dog doesn't love a ball?), the fairy dogmother goes into action. Soon Cinderella is magically made over in a cozy dog-blanket dress, poodle-puff hairstyle, and booties. Instead of taking a carriage, Cinderella arrives at the palace on foot and with a joyous howl, causing quite a stir among the refined guests. However, the brown-skinned, dog-loving prince is instantly enchanted by Cinderella. Although the jaunty text *ruff*-ly follows the traditional tale, in the end, Cinderella exhibits independence with a prince she likes but doesn't know well enough to marry. Cheery, cartoonish illustrations lend to the cleverness in this feminist, fractured fairy tale. Pair with Deborah Underwood's *Interstellar Cinderella* (2015), another spirited take on this classic story. —*Angela Leeper*

Close to You from Far Away.

By Erica Root. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 40p. Running Press Kids, $18.99 (9780762481132). K–Gr. 2.

Gigi and her grandmother enjoy each other's company, so it's a sad day when Gigi and her parents move away, but Grandma whispers, "Don't worry Gigi, it's okay. I'm close to you from far away." Gigi wonders what that means, but she doesn't ask. Gigi likes her new home and adjusts pretty well. On good days and the occasional not-so-good one, she calls Grandma, who always ends her call with the same rhyme. And still Gigi wonders what it means. Sometimes Grandma sends her little treasures. After a bad day, Gigi brings them out for consolation and feels almost like she's getting a hug from Grandma. And suddenly the meaning of the comforting rhyme becomes clear. Written in prose apart from the repeated rhyme, the text is concise and reads aloud well. Root's illustrations, full of curving lines and warm colors, reinforce the kinship between Gigi and her grandmother, while expressing each character's emotions clearly. And in a turnaround at the story's end, Gigi recites the rhyme to her grandmother. A satisfying, emotionally resonant picture book. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Cooler than Lemonade.

By Harshita Jerath. Illus. by Chloe Burgett.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky, $17.99 (9781728254296). K–Gr. 2.

One sizzling hot summer day, Eva and her little brother, Aru, set up a lemonade stand. It's an instant success, attracting many thirsty customers. Eva takes great care to make the best lemonade she can but has to scramble when her neighbor Jake starts his own lemonade business. The competition is fierce, and Eva tries innovation after innovation, trying to keep up, but finally has to admit defeat and sadly closes shop. Her little brother asks her to make him something, because that's when Eva seems happiest. Eva sets about whipping up a batch of kulfi, a type of frozen dessert from India (recipe included). Inspiration strikes: Why not set up a kulfi stand, but this time in partnership with Jake? Brown-skinned Eva is portrayed as a problem solver, meeting challenge after challenge by pondering, experimenting, and trying new possibilities. The whimsical illustrations highlight Eva's thought processes, showing how her new ideas *snap, sizzle,* and *sprout.* The book is a visual treat (be sure to check out the endpapers), and the message about persevering is inspiring. —*Kathleen McBroom*

Corner.

By Zo-O. Illus. by the author. Tr. by Ellen Jang.

Mar. 2023. 64p. Owlkids, $19.95 (9781771475327). K–Gr. 2.

A crow stares at a blank corner. Bit by bit, the crow turns the empty space into a unique home. Simple furniture is first. It adds a bed, bookshelf, rug, and lamp. Next comes a plant. As the crow reads to it and waters it, the plant grows bigger, but the rest of the crow's corner is static. Dissatisfied, the crow wonders what else to add. In a burst of inspiration, it begins decorating the walls. Next, the crow adds a speaker to play music. As the plant and the drawings both become larger, it is as if the crow itself is growing, not in size but in awareness. Reaching a greater point of inspiration, the crow cuts a hole and builds a window for the corner. For the first time, the perspective shifts completely to show the outside, with another bird looking in as the crow leans out the corner window. Exploring themes of growth, trying new things, and broadening one's view, this understated story uses ever-expanding visual images to skillfully convey layers of meaning. —*Lucinda Whitehurst*

Dakota Crumb and the Secret Bookshop: A Tiny Treasure Hunt.

By Jamie Michalak. Illus. by Kelly Murphy.

May 2023. 32p. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536223309). PreS–Gr. 2.

In this sequel to *Dakota Crumb: Tiny Treasure Hunter* (2021), Dakota's cousin Julien writes to the adventurous mouse, asking her to locate "a rare book about lost treasures" and including a cryptic symbol as a clue. Dakota finds the symbol on a bookstore's door and ventures inside. She follows another clue up to the second-floor shop and another into the children's section, where the intrepid adventurer is appalled to find "a sleeping monster," a dog that wakens and trots along behind her. Dakota enters a mouse-size doorway on a high shelf. Surprise! It's Dakota's birthday party, and Julien gives her a book on tiny treasures. Seek-and-find fans will particularly enjoy the last page, where Michalak offers a peek at 18 objects illustrated in Dakota's little book and invites kids to look through their picture book's illustrations again to discover each prize for themselves. Murphy's distinctive pen-and-ink artwork, digitally colored with subtle hues, is lively in its portrayal of the mice and stunning in its depiction of Paris. A playful picture book packed with hidden treasures. —*Carolyn Phelan*

For the Love of Lettuce.

By Courtney Dicmas. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Child's Play, $19.99 (9781786284761). PreS–Gr. 2.

Zip and Parsley are two caterpillars with very different personalities. Zip likes plans and routines, while Parsley loves to live in the moment. When Parsley unthinkingly chomps through the last of their lettuce, Zip has a plan for finding more, which contains an element of danger. A leafy green garden is just on the other side of a nearby fence, but it's home to several free-range, bug-eating chickens. Zip and Parsley begin their journey, with Parsley making frequent stops to eat and play, much to Zip's annoyance. The next morning dawns with the pair at the fence—only Parsley has disappeared into a chrysalis. This was not part of Zip's plan! Zip is sad to lose his friend, and when his garden exploration is cut short by the arrival of the chickens, Zip must think on his toes like Parsley would. Happily (though it's scientifically suspect), Parsley hatches and soars to the rescue just in time. Dicmas' entertaining illustrations employ cool colors and lots of laughs as this odd couple learns to embrace change and personal difference. —*Rosie Camargo*

Gigi and Ojiji: What's in a Name?

By Melissa Iwai. Illus. by the author.

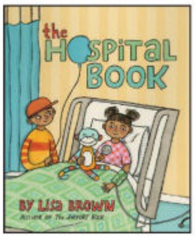
2023. 32p. Harper, $16.99 (9780063208094); paper, $4.99 (9780063208087). K–Gr. 2.

Gigi wonders why no one calls her by her full name. When her mother explains that Gigi once struggled to pronounce *Geraldine*, her full name, Gigi deems her current moniker to be “a baby name” and tries on new ones. The child soon gets tired of printing out all the letters in *Geraldine* when she signs her artwork, and her real name is also hard for Ojiji, her Japanese grandfather, to pronounce. After Ojiji teaches her how to write her middle name in Japanese, she wants to be known as Hanako. Eventually, having a sense of agency, the child realizes, “I don’t feel like it’s me.” With the support of her family, she finds her authentic identity: “She would be Gigi from now on!” This entry in the I Can Read series for newly independent readers is a follow-up to *Gigi and Ojiji* (2022) and includes a glossary of four Japanese words. Iwai’s expressive cartoons complement the text and capture warm family dynamics. A relatable look at names and why they matter. —*Linda Ludke*

The Hospital Book.

By Lisa Brown. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823446650); e-book, $11.99 (9780823455102). PreS–Gr. 3.



A young biracial girl (her mother is white, her father is Black) takes readers through her sudden illness, the trip to the hospital, and everything she experiences in that potentially scary place. The child chronicles the nine different times she cries, beginning with the stomach pain she experiences preceding her appendectomy and ending with her tears of joy when it’s all over. Much of the mystery of a hospital stay is dispelled in this helpful book, which shows a male nurse taking the girl’s temperature and blood pressure and inserting an IV in her arm. Her doctor, a woman, performs tests to determine the diagnosis, before the girl is prepped for surgery. The author-illustrator depicts spending a night in the hospital (with a parent sleeping nearby) and getting up to walk the next day, before going home and back to the familiar. Intricately detailed and colorful pictures use India ink and watercolors, with abundant speech bubbles throughout. Observant readers will notice that some people seen outside the hospital and in the waiting room appear again later, while adults will get a kick out of some familiar names: Dr. Zhivago, Dr. Watson, and Nurse Nightingale. Brown and her graphic-novel-inspired illustrations offer children significant insight into what might be expected if they ever need to have surgery. —*Maryann Owen*

Long Goes to Dragon School.

By Helen H. Wu. Illus. by Mae Besom.

Feb. 2023. 36p. Yeehoo, $18.99 (9781953458506). PreS–Gr. 2.

Long is excited for his first day of Dragon School, but his enthusiasm is quickly snuffed out when his teacher assumes that all the students have the ability to breathe fire. Long comes from dragons who breathe water! Afraid to tell the teacher this, Long muddles through the cooking lesson by pretending to burn his potato (he paints it black) and practicing in secret. On the last day of the lesson, the other dragons roast, toast, and grill treats for their class picnic. Poor Long breaks down and confesses to being a water dragon. The teacher apologizes for not being aware of this and quickly pivots to encourage Long to cook something using water. Besom sweetly tells Long’s story through delicate watercolor-and-pencil illustrations that are awash in jade greens and best observed up close. Long learns perseverance and self-acceptance, while his class learns a valuable lesson on cultural differences. A thoughtful author’s note explains dragons’ roles as water spirits in China and draws parallels between Long’s experiences and those of immigrants navigating new cultures. —*Rosie Camargo*

Malola’s Museum Adventures: Career Day.

By Joelle Avelino. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Abrams/Tate, $16.99 (9781849768139). K–Gr. 3.

For Career Day, Malola must write about what she wants to be when she grows up, but the young girl doesn’t know what to choose. She decides to go to her favorite place for some inspiration: the museum. During her visit, a portrait comes to life and invites Malola into the frames of paintings depicting groundbreaking women. Astonished, Malola learns about real-life figures such as Sahle-Work Zewde (Ethiopia’s first woman president), Mamokgethi Phakeng (a professor and education activist), Edna Nyadar (a taxi driver and businesswoman), and author Ellen Banda-Aaku. With each new person introduced, Malola recognizes a related quality in herself and envisions taking a similar career path. The cheerful digital illustrations carry a childlike quality and appear in bright tropical hues, and they include portraits of all the amazing women discussed. This title subtly lifts up women leaders and changemakers—all of whom are women of color—who aren’t commonly included in biographies, all while encouraging readers of all stripes to see their own vast and varied potential. An empowering pick for guidance counselors and career units. —*Tiffany Flowers*

Moon’s Ramadan.

By Natasha Khan Kazi. Illus. by the author.

Feb. 2023. 40p. HarperCollins/Versify, $18.99 (9780358694090). PreS–Gr. 2.

The month of Ramadan is the holiest of times for Muslims all over the world. It starts with the sighting of a specific new moon and ends a month later with the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. In *Moon’s Ramadan,* an anthropomorphized moon smiles down on the people of the Earth as they begin the traditions of the holy month. On each page, she visits a different Muslim country, which readers get to appreciate through the detailed, colorful illustrations showing people in various stages of preparation for and celebration of Ramadan. In Turkey, for example, a drummer walks the streets, banging out a beat to wake sleepers for their morning meal and prayer at sunrise. Moon glides around the planet, taking the reader to all parts of the world to witness people practicing acts of charity, generosity, kindness, and love. The diversity of the Muslim population is evident in the illustrations, making this a welcome addition to shelves of books about celebrations. —*Amina Chaudhri*

My Little Thief.

By Augusten Burroughs. Illus. by Bonnie Lui.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $18.99 (9780316374132). K–Gr. 2.

Young Chloe is confident in her taste. She likes cupcakes, books, and striped leggings. Chloe *dislikes* sunburns, lightning storms, and birds, though her opinion on the latter wavers after she encounters a curious crow on the edge of the woods. She shares her sandwich with the bird, and when she returns the next day, the crow presents her with a shiny button pin. Delighted, Chloe continues sharing her snacks, and the crow responds with gifts of assorted objects. But trouble comes when someone notices that a gifted earring was stolen from her grandmother. Chloe returns the jewelry, but no one believes her about the mischievous crow, so she sets out to prove that her bird friend is real. The delightfully quirky tale, inspired by a real news story, is full of sweet surprises, and both Chloe and the crow are well developed. Playful mixed-media illustrations are expressive and detailed, wonderfully conveying both human and crow high jinks. An irresistible avian adventure that will have readers seeking out amicable bird allies of their own. —*Emily Graham*

Night in the City.

By Julie Downing. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823452064); e-book, $11.99 (9780823455188). PreS–Gr. 3.

At nightfall in the city, when children are getting ready to sleep, some grown-ups are preparing to leave for work. They lace their boots, put on their name tags, and say goodbye to their families and pets. Some workers drive taxis, while others have jobs in bakeries, hospitals, or hotels. During an emergency, a dispatcher tells the police and firefighters where to go next. At the museum, a security guard and a janitor are working all night. But at dawn, the workers put on their jackets and head for home, where their neighbors and their families are just waking up. A quiet text leads viewers through this picture book, but it’s the art that is most memorable. Children who are fond of seek-and-find books will particularly enjoy exploring the intricate pictures to find particular characters in different scenes. Created using watercolors, colored pencils, and "digital touches," Downing's illustrations show a sure sense of figure drawing and composition as well as an uncommon sensitivity in using color combinations effectively. A beautiful introduction to the city at night. *—Carolyn Phelan*

Ramen for Everyone.

By Patricia Tanumihardja. Illus. by Shiho Pate.

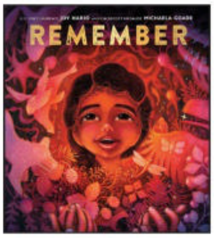
Mar. 2023. 48p. Atheneum, $18.99 (9781665904353). PreS–Gr. 2.

Whether with seaweed, egg, or pork, Hiro loves ramen and wants to make his own perfect bowl one day. In the meantime, the boy observes his father, who learned to make ramen from his father while growing up in Hawaii. Action-packed panels in a graphic-novel style, accentuated with action verbs (*chops*, *simmers*, *steeps*, etc.), briefly turn Hiro's dad into a culinary champion. On his seventh birthday, Hiro thinks he's ready to continue the tradition, but in his action scenes, disaster ensues with bland broth, soggy noodles, and unfit toppings. Just when he's ready to give up, his father reminds him that ramen doesn't need to be perfect. With new resolve, Hiro makes ramen with "superspecial" toppings perfect for each family member (cheese for Mom, Asian pears for his sister, and pineapple for Dad), realizing that he simply hasn't achieved flavorful broth or springy noodles—yet. Cookbook author Tanumihardja concludes her children's debut with a short history of ramen, kitchen tips, and an easy miso-ramen recipe. A hearty serving of Japanese cuisine, resilience, and family fun. *—Angela Leeper*

★ Remember.

By Joy Harjo. Illus. by Michaela Goade.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Random House Studio, $18.99 (9780593484845). K–Gr. 3.

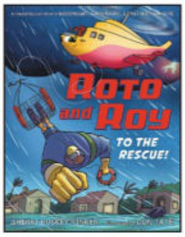


With Caldecott Medalist Goade as illustrator, recent U.S. Poet Laureate Harjo's acclaimed poem becomes a beauty to behold. In spare, direct verse, Harjo, a member of the Mvskoke Nation, encourages readers to look to the universe, their own beginning within it, and the interconnectedness of all its creatures. The softened watercolor-and-mixed-media illustrations, drawing on Goade's Tlingit culture, begin with a luminous eagle soaring through the cosmos until it reaches the edges of the earth. In a blend of time and space, a Native American girl is born. She becomes part of a continuing journey across the earth, among the land, the seas, the mountains, and the forests, and along with the Earth's plants and animals, her family, and her ancestors. Each spread features only a sentence or two, allowing readers to pause and reflect upon the text's significance and the illustrations' details. Symbols in one image often carry over and lend significance to others, such as the girl's small hand forming roots, which lead through the soil to a larger soil-like hand in bloom. The illustrations end full circle with the universe reflected in the girl's eyes and a colorful culmination of repeated imagery as the girl admires the eagle continuing its path. A rich and reverential tribute to life, family, and poetry. *—Angela Leeper*

★ Roto and Roy: To the Rescue!

By Sherri Duskey Rinker. Illus. by Don Tate.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316535045). PreS–Gr. 2.



Roy Thunder, a superhero-size pilot with broad shoulders and a wasp waist, leaps into the cockpit of Roto, a jaunty-looking yellow helicopter, and they lift off into the middle of booming thunder and zigzag lightning to rescue people caught in a sudden, massive storm. This action tale, told in colorful digital illustrations and a comic-book style, is the second in the new Roto and Roy series (the first is 2022's *Roto and Roy: Helicopter Heroes*), created by the author of the enormously popular Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site books. The Roto and Roy adventures feature the Goodnight series' easy-to-follow rhyming couplets; words and punctuation that wonderfully mimic sounds; and vibrant, detailed artwork. But this time Rinker emphasizes rescue over construction and adds a human element in the enormous form of Roy, an equal partner to the dauntless Roto. The setting here is the American Southwest, with desert landscapes and adobe homes caught in torrents of rain. Together, helicopter and human perform heroic feats, including lifting the cab of a jackknifed truck dangling precariously off a cliff road and using a helicopter rescue basket to save a family of four from their nearly submerged car. Propulsive action, engaging illustrations, and a great message about the value of determination and teamwork make this a must. *—Connie Fletcher*

The Tiger Who Came for Dinner.

By Steve Smallman. Illus. by Joëlle Dreidemy.

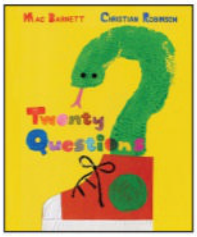
Mar. 2023. 32p. Tiger Tales, $18.99 (9781664300224). K–Gr. 2.

In a deceptively sweet-seeming tale with both figurative and literal teeth, Smallman and Dreidemy depict a loving, if unconventional, family: Wolf, Little Lamb, and Omelet, their doglike alligator. It's Omelet who comes trotting out of the woods bearing not the usual stick but an adorably fluffy tiger cub. Awww. Time to take the silent, big-eyed tyke back to its no doubt worried family. Only Omelet notices the rather predatory way Fluffy cozies up to mice, fish, and even Little Lamb along the way and so is poised to come to the rescue with a terrifying SNAP! when the tiger cub summons its delighted parents with a sudden shout of "MOM, DAD. I'M HOME! AND I'VE BROUGHT . . . DINNER!" Variations on the titular play on words have seen long service for tales with benevolent final twists; consider this as a deliciously thrilling surprise for storytime audiences set up by the likes of Ken Brown's *What's the Time, Grandma Wolf?* (2001), Margery Cuyler's *Skeleton for Dinner* (2013), or Jessica Olien's *When a Tiger Comes to Dinner* (2019). *—John Peters*

★ Twenty Questions.

By Mac Barnett. Illus. by Christian Robinson.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536215137). PreS–Gr. 2.



In an endlessly inventive, tongue-in-cheek fashion, the eternally celebrated Barnett joins forces with Caldecott nominee Robinson to craft a series of questions that work in creative tandem with the illustrations but, purposefully, have no answers. Stimulating conversation starters encourage children to use their imaginations as they consider their responses to posed questions. This is not a book made for quick page turns; there are many possible responses to every question, and each answer might lead to a lengthy discussion. Both questions and images range from the reasonable to the absurd: "How did that cow get all the way up there?" asks one page, which features a brown cow atop a windmill. "Which of these fellows has a better singing voice?" asks another, which features two men—one white, portly, and balding, the other Black, behatted, and skinny, each with their mouths wide open. Robinson's large, crisp, brightly hued illustrations are eccentric and engaging, and the details in each leave room for more questions. Placed on white backgrounds, the mixed-media pictures, which include sponged paint and collage, are quirky and fun. This unconventional picture book will be a hit in storytimes and for one-on-one sharing, as the responses will probably change whenever the book is read. *—Maryann Owen*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Barnett and Robinson are both superstars in their own right. Together, and with a book that's built for rereading, this won't stay on shelves for long.

The Umbrella.

By Beth Ferry. Illus. by Tom Lichtenheld.

Mar. 2023. 48p. Clarion, $19.99 (9780358447726). PreS–Gr. 2.

Seemingly endless rain has made everything "dreary. Weary. Dim. Grim" for young and old. However, it's time for a girl to walk her pup. Coming upon an intriguing curio shop, they venture inside and find an old, shabby, yellow umbrella. What could it be used for? Perhaps a coat? An upside-down, pup-size boat? Anyway, it's free. But as they carry it home through the park, it falls apart, leaving pieces on the ground—"Crumble. Tumble. Trail of tatters." Though the rain continues, the pair ventures out again and finds something unexpected: bright-yellow umbrellas have sprung up, flowerlike, in the wake of the previous day's walk. There are plenty to share, and as townspeople gather, yellow umbrellas in hand, the clouds depart and a smiling sun emerges, bringing joy and fun. Ferry and Lichtenheld (*Stick and Stone*, 2015) use succinct, descriptive rhymes and delightfully detailed watercolor-and-pencil illustrations to tell this whimsical, read-aloud-friendly story. Just about every kid has experienced disappointment on a rainy day, and this charming, playful story's conclusion will surely pique imaginations. *—Shelle Rosenfeld*

Wants vs. Needs vs. Robots.

By Michael Rex. Illus. by the author.

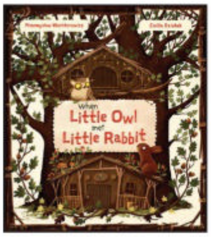
Mar. 2023. 32p. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $18.99 (9780593530092). PreS–Gr. 2.

To demonstrate the difference between true, necessary-for-survival "needs" and optional "wants," Rex sends a fresh cast of animated, loudly hued robots cavorting across the spreads of this follow-up to *Facts vs. Opinions vs. Robots* (2020). While it's partly for fun, it also functions to warn against the hazards of trading off one tool (cool boots, a remote-control platypus) for another (legs, batteries), and to introduce the idea of negotiating fair bargains or exchanges. Though logic stumbles over language in a contention that, to find out what happens next, readers will "want" to turn the page (it would be equally accurate here to call that a "need"), Rex does neatly set out the distinction at the end: "These robots are happy to HAVE the things they NEED so they can ENJOY the things they WANT." Food for thought—and not just for the kids. *—John Peters*

★ When Little Owl Met Little Rabbit.

By Przemysław Wechterowicz. Illus. by Emilia Dziubak. Tr. by Polly Lawson.

Apr. 2023. 40p. Floris, $17.95 (9781782507741). PreS–Gr. 2.



Little Owl and her father live near the top of an old oak tree. Little Rabbit and his mother live near the bottom, among the tree's roots. Little Rabbit spends his days racing about, exploring the great forest around them. Little Owl spends her nights swooping across the sky. But they have never met. One morning, Mother Rabbit says that her bunny reminds her of Little Owl when he tilts his head. That evening, Father Owl says that his owlet reminds him of Little Rabbit when she hops up and down. Each little one is curious about the other. They meet one evening under a full moon, and, eventually, they discover other ways to connect with each other. The simple, well-chosen words and parallel phrases in the text, combined with the many paired illustrations, add a charming dual quality to this cozy picture book, which makes the occasions when the two main characters meet all the more special. First published in Poland, this endearing picture book reads aloud beautifully and has broad appeal for children. Pair this with Paul Meisel's *Good Night, Bat! Good Morning, Squirrel!* (2016) for an amusing variation on the same theme: nocturnal and diurnal animals who become very good friends. *—Carolyn Phelan*

The World and Everything in It.

By Kevin Henkes. Illus. by the author.

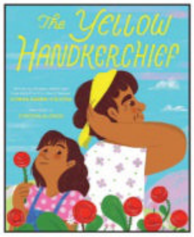
Mar. 2023. 32p. Greenwillow, $18.99 (9780063245648). PreS–Gr. 1.

Young children may feel like the world is full of things that are bigger and more important than they are. With an unerring understanding of the child's perspective, Henkes presents simple comparisons, demonstrating how all the people and parts of the world are significant to the whole. Using brown ink and watercolor paint, the opening image shows a large tree and a small sprout. The text acknowledges there are "big things and little things in the world": Little things such as animals, flowers, and pebbles, and a blank box to suggest the things so small they cannot be seen. Big things such as the sea, the sun, and the moon. Next, a series of children interacts with the world in natural ways. A child may pick up a pebble, a flower, or an animal while also being part of the bigger elements by holding some seawater, sitting in a sunbeam, or watching the moon. We all fit into the world; we all are somewhere "in-between." Soothing and accepting, the book reassuringly demonstrates that the world is big enough for everyone and everything. *—Lucinda Whitehurst*

★ The Yellow Handkerchief.

By Donna Barba Higuera. Illus. by Cynthia Alonso.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419760143). K–Gr. 3.

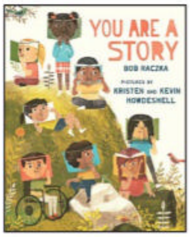


A young girl doesn't like her grandmother's old yellow handkerchief. Abuela wears the pañuelo amarillo in her hair while gathering tomatillos and peppers from their garden, uses it to carry eggs from the chicken coop, and waves it to catch the child's attention. When a friend comes over to play, the narrator is self-conscious, seeing the well-worn handkerchief as a bright beacon that draws attention to all the ways her family is different from her peer's—from the homemade chorizo in their rural kitchen, instead of store-bought pizza, to the Spanish words spoken instead of English. With some distance and reflection, the child begins to view the handkerchief as a source of comfort, not embarrassment, and realizes the depth of her grandmother's hard work, fortitude, and unequivocal love. Complex, conflicting emotions are realistically conveyed with potent subtlety. Spanish words are woven gracefully throughout: "Abuela slips off her yellow handkerchief and wipes my tears. She kisses my cheek. 'Ser tú mismo,' she says, telling me to be myself." Argentinian illustrator Alonso's expressive digitally created artwork radiates warmth with vivid colors and tender scenes, capturing compassionate care and familial traditions passed down through the generations. Inspired by Newbery medalist Higuera's own childhood memories (as revealed in a poignant author's endnote), this marvelous and moving picture book is an affecting tribute to the ties that bind. *—Linda Ludke*

★ You Are a Story.

By Bob Raczka. Illus. by Kristen Howdeshell and Kevin Howdeshell.

Feb. 2023. 32p. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823449149); e-book, $11.99 (9780823455119). PreS–Gr. 3.



Renowned author and poet Raczka is back with this stunning exploration of the interconnection between us and the world. In lyrical lines, he describes what humans are and do in straightforward terms—"You are someone's child"; "You breathe. // You eat. // You sleep." We are all living beings who have our own thoughts, memories, and experiences that make up our unique stories. But as the book progresses, Raczka provides metaphorical perspectives on what makes us individuals, referring to readers as astronauts voyaging through the galaxy, mysteries with an unwritten future, and sponges ready to absorb information. There is emphasis on the idea that our stories are ongoing and we are the only ones with the power to decide where our story takes us next. As readers grow and learn, they are reminded not only to share these stories but to listen to others as well. With lively illustrations by Kristen and Kevin Howdeshell, using powerful visual metaphors in an inviting, playful style, the universal beauty of life is perfectly captured and harmonizes well with the inspiring text. This empowering and evocative title makes for a delightful read-aloud and is a great pick for those who enjoyed *All around Us* (2017), by Xelena González, and *Be a Tree!* (2021), by Maria Gianferrari. *—Michelle Ortega*

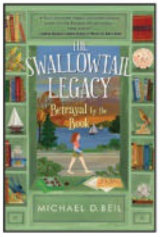
Spotlight on **Middle-Grade Fiction**

Art by Shawn Harris from *The Eyes and the Impossible,* by Dave Eggers.

★ Betrayal by the Book.

By Michael D. Beil. Illus. by Torborg Davern.

Feb. 2023. 336p. Pixel+Ink, $17.99 (9781645950509); e-book, $10.99 (9781645951667). Gr. 5–7.



When writers gather for a conference on Swallowtail Island, 12-year-old Lark is assigned as a page to help Ann Keyheart, the author of her favorite book, by guiding her to events and providing golf cart transportation. Keyheart, a detestable woman, attempts to manipulate everyone around her, including her personal assistant, Didi, who is highly allergic to nuts. After finding Didi dead in their cottage, Keyheart screams and faints. Arriving immediately, Lark, who had befriended Didi, is clearheaded and suspicious. She calls 911, notices nut-filled and nut-free chocolates, and absorbs other details to contemplate later. A seriously skilled amateur detective, Lark is still sporting a cast on her arm following an injury sustained during her previous case, described in Beil's *Wreck at Ada's Reef* (2022). Reading that book is not a prerequisite for enjoying this one, although the earlier novel built a strong foundation for the Swallowtail Legacy series, particularly in creating the island setting and the relatively large cast of vivid characters. While Lark seems unusually precocious and courageous, she is also down-to-earth and likable. Her first-person narrative leaves no doubt of her prime suspect, but guessing the murderer's identity seems less important than understanding what happened and thwarting the villain's escape. A thoroughly engaging mystery. *—Carolyn Phelan*

Children of the Black Glass.

By Anthony Peckham.

Mar. 2023. 368p. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, $17.99 (9781665913133). Gr. 5–8.

As dark and flinty as shards of the titular obsidian used here both for weapons and for magic, this debut fantasy takes two children raised in an isolated, impoverished mountain community of glass miners down the slopes to Halfway—a sprawling town of ruthless traders and dangerous, enigmatic sorcerers—to be attacked, robbed, and swept up in a violent civil conflict. Though Peckham gives 14-year-old Tell and his younger sister, Wren, new city friends and a cantankerous donkey as appealing allies, it's their shared toughness of mind and well-honed abilities to think and work together that get them through challenges ranging from finding a way to free the captured and enslaved men of their village to coping with the shattering discovery that their own absent and presumed dead mother had readily abandoned them to chip out a new life for herself. The harsh tone and brutal twists will leave readers in a sober frame, but the tale features embedded glints of loyalty, courage, and friendship to lighten the load. *—John Peters*

★ Control Freaks.

By J. E. Thomas.

May 2023. 272p. Levine Querido, $18.99 (9781646143054). Gr. 4–6.

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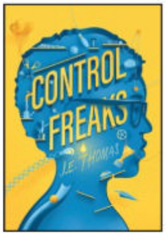
exercises takes many of the hyper-motivated students at a Denver middle school for the gifted out of their comfort zones in this warm and funny debut. As a quintet of misfits, ranging from nine-year-old brainiac Travis Elizabeth "Shark" Cod to Frederick Douglass Zezzmer—destined, in his own mind anyway, to become the world's greatest inventor—make their way past six STEAMS-based challenges (the second *S* is for *sports*) that ruthlessly eliminate teams that can't get the hang of working together. Thomas strews the increasingly suspenseful competition with teachable moments and traces learning curves not only for the students but for teachers and parents, too. The cast, premise, and lightly delivered life lessons are reminiscent of E. L. Konigsburg's *The View from Saturday*, and however reluctant readers may be to accept the author's proposition that winning isn't always the same as coming in *first*, they'll be swept up by the drama and the brisk dialogue, not to mention a school where hot-lunch choices are based on answering quiz questions and the principal snatches student-made spy drones out of the air and pockets them without breaking stride. *—John Peters*



Eb & Flow.
By Kelly J. Baptist.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Crown, $16.99 (9780593429136). Gr. 5–8.

Two seventh-graders throw punches over a stepped-on pair of shoes and earn a 10-day suspension in this novel in verse that follows both Ebony and Flow over the course of the suspension. While the two find themselves at odds, through their dual points of view, readers see they are both dealing with similar issues: single-parent homes, military fathers, older siblings with their own baggage, and a desire to change their own destinies to avoid more trouble. Baptist's verse flows easily and nicely captures the voices of Eb and Flow, and while the mundanity of 10 days out of school comes and goes, there's an underlying current of possible violence that keeps the reader on their toes. Though the pace occasionally drags, it picks back up when new twists unfold. Baptist, a teacher herself, knows how to capture the interest of students, and following two kids out of school for violence allows the chance to look at how our environments shape the choices we make. Hand to fans of Jason Reynolds and Jacqueline Woodson. *—Aryssa Damron*

Elf Dog and Owl Head.
By M. T. Anderson. Illus. by Junyi Wu.

Apr. 2023. 240p. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536222814). Gr. 3–6.

Anderson positions his breezy new fantasy in the present primarily through the pervasive presence of "the sickness," which has citizens living in boredom-generating quarantine. Online school is a joke and a summer without

Continued on p.64

Top 10 Novels for Tweens

TANYA GUERRERO
Adrift

Bridging the crevasse between kid- and teendom is hard both for young people and the librarians serving them. The novels below—all reviewed in *Booklist* between February 15, 2022, and February 1, 2023—represent our top picks for tween audiences. *—Julia Smith*

Adrift. By Tanya Guerrero. 2022. Farrar, $16.99 (9780374389659). Gr. 7–10.

Half-Filipino cousins Coral and Isa are as close as sisters, but their bond is tested when a shipwreck strands Coral on a remote island. A visceral story of grief and triumph.

Crumbs. By Danie Stirling. Art by the author. 2022. Clarion, $24.99 (9780358467793). Gr. 9–12.

Magic abounds in this feel-good romance, based on the webcomic of the same name, which follows the burgeoning relationship between magically gifted Ray and sweet-tempered Laurie.

Dead Flip. By Sara Farizan. 2022. Algonquin, $17.99 (9781643750804). Gr. 7–12.

In the vein of *Stranger Things* comes a story of two teens investigating a childhood friend's mysterious disappearance—and sudden, unsettling reappearance. Packed with 1980s nostalgia, horror, and the havoc of adolescence.

In Honor of Broken Things. By Paul Acampora. 2022. Dial, $17.99 (9781984816641). Gr. 5–8.

Despite their different personalities and life experiences, Oscar, Noah, and Riley become fast friends after meeting at their junior–senior high school. Acampora writes with insight and wit, capturing the complexity of teen life.

It Sounds like This. By Anna Meriano. 2022. Viking, $18.99 (9780593116906). Gr. 8–11.

Sophomore Yasmín is so ready for her first year of marching band, but her plans are derailed when she calls out an incident of bullying that impacts the entire low-brass section. The story's honest approach to evolving friendships makes it immensely relatable.

Nikhil Out Loud. By Maulik Pancholy. 2022. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $17.99 (9780063091924). Gr. 5–8.

Indian American cartoon voice actor Nikhil's eighth-grade year is not going as planned. The school musical, puberty, local homophobes, and generational differences all loom as Nikhil tries to find his voice.

Shonen Note: Boy Soprano, v.1. By Yuhki Kamatani. Art by the author. 2022. Kodansha, paper, $12.99 (9781646515011). Gr. 7–12.

Middle-schooler Yutaka is blessed with a stunning soprano voice, and when he joins the school choir, the group has high hopes for the upcoming competition. This gorgeously illustrated manga captures the joyous yet fleeting quality of youth.

Unfadeable. By Maurice Broaddus. 2022. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $16.99 (9780062796349). Gr. 5–8.

Unhoused graffiti artist and eighth-grader Bella uncovers something fishy with the city's finances and teams up with new friends to investigate. Equal parts action and mystery with a heavy yet middle-grade-friendly nod to 2000s street lit.

Unraveller. By Frances Hardinge. 2023. Abrams/Amulet, $19.99 (9781419759314). Gr. 6–9.

Hardinge builds an immersive fantasy world for her story of a young teen boy with the power to unravel curses, the once-cursed girl he saved, and the treacherous plot unfolding among those in power.

Wolfish. By Christiane M. Andrews. 2022. Little, Brown, $16.99 (9780316496063). Gr. 6–8.

In this loose reimagining of the Romulus and Remus myth, twins—one girl and one wolf—must overthrow the cruel king. Literary readers will adore Andrews' lyrical blend of fairy-tale and historical fantasy.

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Goosebump
NIGHT of the
A BANTAM-SKYLARK BOOK
1
SWEET VALLEY TWINS
CREATED BY
FRANCINE PASCAL
Elizabeth is afraid she's losing her best friend—her twin sister!
BEST FRIENDS
NANCY DREW MYSTERY STORIES
58
THE FLYING
AUCER MYSTER
A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY
CYNTHIA YUAN CHENG
THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB
MARY ANNE'S BAD LUCK MYST
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
ANN M. MARTIN
SCHOLASTIC

Notes from the Field

Lindsey Tomsu on Series Fiction

By Ronny Khuri

This issue's spotlight has had the Books for Youth team contemplating the hallmarks of middle-grade novels, which naturally led to discussions about series fiction and why it's such a backbone of the category. To further this conversation, we sought out a true expert on the topic. Lindsey Tomsu is the Youth and Teen Services Supervisor at Nippersink Public Library in Richmond, IL, whose professional and academic pursuits have placed her at the crossroads of cultural history and youth series fiction. Here she shares her expertise to help contextualize our modern obsession with serialized stories—and middle-grade series, in particular.

Khuri: *Serialized storytelling has become prevalent across most forms of media—books, podcasts, TV shows, video games, comics, manga. Why do you think series are so widely appealing nowadays?*

Tomsu: Honestly, they have never *not* been so widely appealing. Series books have been in existence for nearly 125 years, and serialized media has existed in many forms throughout the years—comic books, radio dramas, soap operas, pulp fiction, etc. Most of this entertainment, however, has been decried as "fluff" and not "serious" enough. If anything, it is the changing attitudes toward serialized forms of media (especially in "binging" content) that has made it seem like there is a huge rise in popularity, when, in fact, I believe this popularity has just been hidden away because for so many decades these books weren't seen as "acceptable" reading choices.

Series books themselves have a hidden history of censorship among librarians. For the first 100 years of series' existence, educators and librarians alike went against the tenet of the Freedom to Read and actively censored these books because they weren't "quality" literature. These attitudes dominated most of the twentieth century—until the American publication of the first Harry Potter book in 1998, when suddenly all the adults—librarians, educators, parents—were giving praise, saying, "This book is getting kids to read!" Um, no. There were plenty of books getting kids to read in the decades before Harry: Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, Baby-Sitters Club, Sweet Valley, Boxcar Children, Goosebumps, and so many more; it is just that these books were labeled, at worst, a detriment to developing a love of reading or, at best, the literary equivalent of popcorn, a good snack with no literary nutritional value.

Khuri: *Can you speak to the roots of the historically negative attitude toward middle-grade series?*

Tomsu: As a cultural historian who researches the history of series books and the growth of negative attitudes toward series (which led to their history and importance being actively ignored for so long), I found a "trifecta" of articles published in the early 1900s that I believe influenced the decades-long hatred toward series. The first was a list of "books to not be circulated," written by a librarian who appeared in the *Wilson Bulletin*. It listed 100 series deemed unacceptable to grace the shelves of juvenile collections. The second article was written by Franklin K. Mathiews, Chief Librarian of the Boys Scouts. In it, he basically equated letting a boy read a series book with giving him a gun to blow his brains out, because such reading was so detrimental to his intelligence that he would never progress past such trash to "quality" books like *Treasure Island*. Last was an anonymous (let's not even get into the logic behind librarians praising an anonymous source!) article in *Fortune* that exposed the Stratemeyer Syndicate (publisher of Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys, and other notable series titles) and, again, argued that such books were mass-produced junk. These articles were used for years as justification for why series books shouldn't be purchased by librarians. If children wanted to read such drivel, they could spend their own allowance on these books—which they gladly did.

Khuri: *Big IP series are often dismissed as being lower quality or less "literary." Why do you think that is, and what value do you find in these books?*

Tomsu: From a historical perspective, I think it is so illogical

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN
GERTRUDE CHANDLER WARNER
THE HARDY BOYS 19
THE DISAPPEARING FLOOR
FRANKLIN W. DIXON
PEE WEE SCOUTS
Camp Ghost-Aw
Judy Delton
A to Z Mysteries
THE DEADLY DUNGEON
BY RON ROY

that librarians fought against series books, because these books are meant to engage young readers and get them to want to read. Isn't that our whole professional goal, to celebrate and encourage the love of reading? For so many decades, generations of children were told their reading choices weren't "good enough" or weren't "real books." What is the one way to get a child to hate reading? Forcing them to read books they aren't interested in and telling them the books they love do not count. Why tell children they couldn't read Pee Wee Scouts or Goosebumps when these were the books getting them to read in the first place?

The way I view it, these books, especially IP series books, are just as transitional as board books are to picture books, picture books are to early readers, and early readers are to chapter books. If a child loves Scooby Doo books and transitions from picture books to early readers to chapter books and has devoured the entire Scooby Doo canon, what can they read next? Move them on to Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, A to Z Mysteries, and eventually move them to *The Westing Game* and *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler,* and from there they will keep reading and eventually make their way to Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie. Series books are an introduction to the world of reading.

One note on IP series not being "literary" enough: Consider how many adults devour James Patterson's books, many of which have a reading level of fourth grade, and ask yourself why it is acceptable for adults to read these best-selling books while letting a fourth grader read a series book at that same level isn't "literary" enough? Librarians need to let go of prejudices against certain books for not being "good" enough, because reading is reading is reading, regardless of the book in question.

Khuri: *Can you talk a bit about the cultural importance of series in youth literature, from a historical perspective?*

Tomsu: My first course for my MLIS allowed us to write a final paper on whatever we wanted, as long as it dealt with libraries or books, and in doing so, I stumbled upon my aforementioned "trifecta" of articles, which led to my realization that there was a complete dearth of any acknowledgment of series books in all the general histories of books for children I had ever read. As I researched more, the only mainstream book I could find was *Mirrors of American Culture*, by Paul Deane, which was published in 1991 (before Goosebumps). Basically, Deane argued as a historian that series books are prime cultural artifacts that can tell a lot about American life at the time a book was published by being critically analyzed through all sorts of historical lenses—race, gender, economics, politics. For example, the 1940s was the time of WWII, and the popular series books were about characters like Cherry Ames, a war nurse. These books reflected the real world and shared messages about that world to young readers. Since there are nearly 125 years of series to take into account (and for every series still remembered today, like Nancy Drew, there are hundreds popular in their time and now forgotten), the research never ends! My favorite research topics have included an examination of American gender roles in series books, a history of American fashion as seen on the covers of series books, and an examination of the rise of the American environmental movement in series books. Series books as cultural artifacts are in a unique position to make history relevant and fun for non-historians!

Khuri: *What do you see in the future for serialized, or even multimedia, storytelling?*

Tomsu: Series will never cease to be popular! As we come up on their 125th anniversary (in 2024), I think they will continue to gain popularity and acceptability. There will always be haters, but again, if our goal is to instill a love of reading in children, then series books should be seen not as the "junk food" of the literary world but instead the "gateway drug" into it. If anything, I would like to see interactive storytelling make a comeback in series, such as recent German import The Little Bad Book series, by Magnus Myst. While Choose Your Own Adventure in tone, the "Bad Book" of the title talks directly to the reader and tells stories along with giving puzzles and riddles that help determine the path the reader takes. Unlike CYOA books, the reader will actually read every page of the book—just not in numerical order! Interactive books like this could be used to engage non-readers with reading by gamifying it and could incorporate many subjects and skills (e.g., STEM, history, escape rooms, etc.) into the plots and puzzles. There is untapped potential here for some fun and popular series.

Top 10 Epic Mythological Middle-Grade Fantasies

ALEXANDRA ALESSANDRI
The ENCHANTED LIFE of VALENTINA MEJIA

The past year brought with it a fresh roster of epic heroes, thanks to a surge in the middle-grade subgenre of epic fantasy inspired by cultural mythology. This list of titles, all reviewed in *Booklist* between February 15, 2022, and February 1, 2023, honors the ever-expanding wealth of diversity in this always-popular space. —*Ronny Khuri*

The Enchanted Life of Valentina Mejía. By Alexandra Alessandri. Atheneum, $17.99 (9781665917056). Gr. 4–7.

This gripping adventure mixes folklore with fantasy that plunges 12-year-old Valentina and her brother, Julián, into an alternate Colombia infested with magical creatures.

Juniper Harvey and the Vanishing Kingdom. By Nina Varela. Little, Brown, $16.99 (9780316706780). Gr. 3–7.

After Juniper meets Galatea, a magical princess from another world—and Juniper's new crush—she must help recover a lost crown before it falls into the hands of an evil enemy.

Kelcie Murphy and the Academy for the Unbreakable Arts. By Erika Lewis. Tor/Starscape, $17.99 (9781250208262). Gr. 6–8.

In this novel inspired by Celtic lore, foster-child Kelcie must find a way to return to the Otherworld, enroll in the Academy of Unbreakable Arts, and unlock her powers.

The Last Fallen Moon. By Graci Kim. Disney/Rick Riordan Presents, $16.99 (9781368073141). Gr. 5–8.

In this second installment of the Gifted Clans series, based on Korean mythology, Riley must restore the lost magic of her community after a coven of angry witches curses her home.

Momo Arashima Steals the Sword of the Wind. By Misa Sugiura. Random/Labyrinth Road, $17.99 (9780593564066). Gr. 5–7.

In this Japanese folklore–inspired fantasy, Momo must embrace her half-goddess nature in order to save her mother and the world.

Nura and the Immortal Palace. By M. T. Khan. Little, Brown/JIMMY Patterson, $16.99 (9780759557956). Gr. 5–8.

In a story weaving traditional Pakistani folklore with the injustice of child labor, Nura is working in the mica mines when she gets pulled into the treacherous but exciting world of the jinn.

Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting. By Roseanne Brown. Disney/Rick Riordan Presents, $17.99 (9781368066365). Gr. 5–8.

This action-packed, Ghanaian-influenced contemporary fantasy explores the bonds of family, friendship, and what happens when you don't know your own history.

Shad Hadid and the Alchemists of Alexandria. By George Jreije. Harper, $16.99 (9780063094819). Gr. 4–7.

As sixth-grader Shad pieces together his Lebanese family's ties with alchemy, he is invited to learn the mystical art at the mysterious Alexandria Academy.

Valentina Salazar Is Not a Monster Hunter. By Zoraida Córdova. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338712711). Gr. 4–6.

When evidence of a rare creature surfaces, Valentina Salazar decides to dive back into the family business of monster rescuing.

Winnie Zeng Unleashes a Legend. By Katie Zhao. 2022. Random, $16.99 (9780593426586). Gr. 5–8.

Groton, Michigan, is supremely boring—at least, that's what Winnie thinks, until she learns that the town is a passage to the spirit realm and that it's her task as a shaman to protect her world.

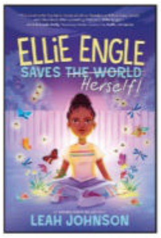
Continued from p.61

friends isn't looking much better—and family time lost its luster ages ago. But when Clay stumbles upon a lost dog—sleek and white, except for the bright red interior of her ears—everything begins to change. Clay instinctively knows that she is a royal elf-hound. What he doesn't know is that she belongs to the unpleasant People Under the Mountain and is trained to hunt all manner of monsters. With Elphinore the elf-hound by his side, Clay's summer becomes one of wonder, as she is able to follow paths invisible to the human eye. This is how he becomes friends with an owl-headed boy named Amos and very nearly gets his family cursed. This playful romp pulls magic into the mundane and gives regular kids the chance to be heroes while Wu's cross-hatched pencil illustrations dust the proceedings with further enchantment. —*Julia Smith*

Ellie Engle Saves Herself.

By Leah Johnson. Illus. by Mirelle Ortega.

May 2023. 288p. Disney/Hyperion, $18.99 (9781368085557). Gr. 4–8.



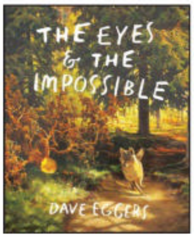
At first, Ellie Engle's world is relatively simple. She is an avid comic book fan, and she has one friend, Abby, who is bold, fashionable, and, unlike Ellie, constantly in the spotlight. Ellie is fine with the simplicity of her life—in fact, she prefers it. When an earthquake shakes her town for the first time in decades, it also shakes up Ellie's life: she's surprised to find that she wakes up with the power to bring dead things back to life. Ellie is immediately overwhelmed with her new powers. She was already beginning to struggle with the prospect of starting junior high, her developing feelings for her best friend, and the stress of helping her single mom, who is barely making ends meet. Now, she finds herself having to come to terms with the reality of being a bona fide superhero—and the spotlight, which she never wanted, that comes with it. This delightful, magical middle-grade debut from young adult author Johnson (*Rise to the Sun*, 2021) excellently harnesses the anxiety that is prevalent throughout the junior-high years. Ellie's magic serves as a metaphor that carves out a space for uncovering and awakening her identity as a young queer Black girl. Strongly recommended for all collections. —*Nashae Jones*

The Eyes and the Impossible.

By Dave Eggers. Illus. by Shawn Harris.

May 2023. 256p. Knopf, $18.99 (9781524764203). Gr. 4–7.

Johannes has always lived his life as a free dog in a vast park by the sea. Three captive elderly bison are the Keepers of the Equilibrium and overseers of the land, and they've dubbed Johannes "the Eyes," as his agility and observant gaze allow him to notice the park's happenings and report back to the bison. An assortment



of wild animals assists Johannes on his daily intel gatherings, and he's content in his dear friendships and freedom. But change is afoot: an enormous building containing mesmerizing rectangles is being built, a herd of mysterious creatures has set up shop in a field, and a heroic act brings Johannes intense human scrutiny that impedes his duties as the Eyes. It will require all of Johannes' ingenuity, kindness, and speed to navigate the new developments while maintaining his precious independence. The utterly delightful book is narrated by a distinctly canine voice similar to the narrator's in Eggers' short story "After I Was Thrown in the River and Before I Drowned," and though Johannes is prone to matter-of-fact bragging and hilarious exaggeration, he's also capable of profound introspection and appreciation of life's wonders. Eggers touches on deep topics with a light hand, effortlessly building suspense and a wonderful sense of adventure. A merry reminder to face the truth about the world and ourselves with compassion, curiosity, and joy. *—Emily Graham*

The Ghosts of Rancho Espanto.

By Adrianna Cuevas.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Farrar, $17.99 (9780374390433). Gr. 4–7.

Cuevas' riveting middle-grade novel follows Rafa, a Cuban American boy who is sent off to a ranch in New Mexico as punishment for a school-prank fiasco with his friends. When Rafa gets to the ranch, he discovers that little is what it seems, and there are more mysteries afoot than he expected from a boring detention job. Rafa usually finds comfort in his favorite role-playing game, the Forgotten Age, but when the very same game and a slushy-machine heist gone wrong result in disaster and punishment, he must learn to establish new friendships and apply hard work in the real world. Readers will relate readily to Rafa's easygoing, creative, voice-y narration and sympathize with him when he is sent far from home to meditate on his actions. As the emotional clues and multiple time lines and multiverses swirl around him at the eerie ranch, Rafa and his new friends must unravel the truth behind the mysterious figure haunting Rancho Espanto and sabotaging Rafa's hard work, learning in the process much more about themselves and their priorities than they originally expected. In a twist that is equal parts haunting and poignant, readers of all ages will be compelled to reflect upon their own lives and legacies after this gripping read. *—Stephanie Cohen*

Ghosts, Toast, and Other Hazards.

By Susan Tan.

Apr. 2023. 240p. Roaring Brook, $17.99 (9781250797001). Gr. 3–6.

APALA Honor–winning author Tan's latest follows sixth-grader Mo, who moves to a new town with her mom and her little sister, CeCe. They're moving in with Uncle Ray, a self-described "aging Chinese hippie," and they're one of the only Asian American families in New Warren. Mo struggles with microaggressions about her ethnicity at school and intense anxiety, while her mom is having trouble getting out of bed each day after her divorce from Mo's stepdad. Mo takes care of CeCe and tries not to be an additional burden, but then a ghost elephant starts haunting Mo's dreams. Tan's emotional story explores different themes of family with humor and a paranormal adventure, and as Mo tries to understand the significance behind the elephant in her dreams, she starts to learn some troubling things about her new town's history, especially the Chinese workers exploited during the heights of its industrial past. This engaging, multilayered story about family history, community, and nefarious ghosts will find plenty of appeal for middle-graders who like fantasies grounded in reality. *—Bobbie Peyton*

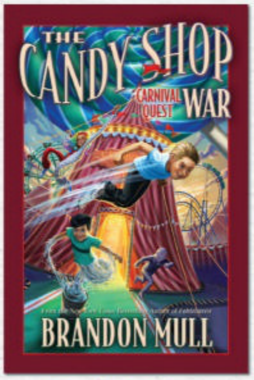
The Girl from Earth's End.

By Tara Dairman.

Mar. 2023. 384p. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536224801). Gr. 3–6.

Isolated Earth's End, with its crumbling monastery walls and carefully tended garden, is the only home 12-year-old Henna knows. When sickness overcomes one of her papas, Henna leaves for a plant-focused secondary school on another of the Gardenia Islands, where

MIDDLE GRADE FANTASY & ADVENTURE



Carnival Quest

The Candy Shop War series finale!

Brandon Mull

The long-awaited series finale continues the fantasy adventure of kids using the powers of magical candy to battle a family of evil magicians. A creepy carnival filled with strange clowns is a ruse to get people trapped in a dreamspace where their weird dreams will come to life and start to plague the town!

9781639930883/$19.99/HC/Ages 8-13 (March)

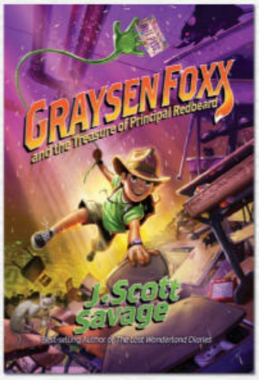
Coming in August by Brandon Mull and Cherie Mull:

The Official Fablehaven Cookbook

Wondrous Recipes Inspired by the Characters from the Series

Each recipe includes a brief description of how it relates to the Fablehaven series. Also features a Brandon Mull original short story about the Brownies, famed bakers from Fablehaven.

9781639930890/$23.99/HC/Ages 8-11 (Aug)



Graysen Foxx and the Treasure of Principal Redbeard

Graysen Foxx, School Treasure Hunter series

J. Scott Savage

A film noir-style adventure series featuring a pint-sized, fedora-wearing Humphrey Bogart-type detective, Graysen Foxx, who navigates a maze of old textbooks, battles menacing school rats, and climbs a mountain of discarded desks in order to find a long-lost chest filled with decades of toys confiscated from generations of bored students.

"Will get pulses going right from the start. Graysen is an engaging protagonist." —*Kirkus*

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Also by J. Scott Savage:

Secrets of the Looking Glass

The Lost Wonderland Diaries series

"Will fascinate young readers." —ChildrensLit

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Shadow Mountain Publishing

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she is convinced she'll find the nightwalker, a potentially extinct climbing vine and "botanical miracle-worker" with healing powers that might save her ailing father. As a scholarship student at St. Basil's Conservatory, Henna has an urgent mission, and she meets an additional challenge: other children (the first she's met), including roommates P (raucous and gender fluid) and Lora (rich, aloof, and disabled). The trio bond and collectively break conventions on their quest for nightwalker seeds, which expands each child's understanding of familial love, acceptance, and the power of acknowledging one's own limits. Henna's is an endearing and compassionate tale in a richly rendered, slightly fantastical world with skillfully crafted story lines around conservation, sacrifices, and grief. Readers will root for Henna as she grows new peer relationships while nurturing an enduring love for her fathers. —*Kit Ballenger*

The Guardian Test: Legends of Lotus Island #1.

By Christina Soontornvat. Illus. by Kevin Hong.

Mar. 2023. 160p. Scholastic, $16.99 (9781338759150); e-book, $16.99 (9781338759167). Gr. 3–6.

Though orphaned at a young age, Plum has enjoyed her quiet childhood with loving grandparents on a small island. She spends her days tending their lush garden and communing with local animals, but her quiet existence is interrupted by an unexpected invitation to attend the prestigious Guardian Academy on Lotus Island. The school has long existed to train future Guardians, a select set of magically endowed humans capable of transforming into mystical creatures and charged with protecting the natural world. With her affinity for flora and fauna, it seems only natural that Plum would conjure such a power. However, she has only a month to train for her first exam, and there's no magic to be found—she worries she may not have what it takes to become a Guardian after all. The first installment in the new series is effortlessly entertaining and atmospheric, and the new Thai-adjacent world is teeming with magical life and gentle mystery. Additionally, Hong's imaginative manga-style illustrations and the book's shorter length will easily draw in younger readers. An enchanting eco-fable sure to intrigue and delight. —*Emily Graham*

PANDEMIC-THEMED STORIES

VIRTUALLY ME

Chad Morris and Shelly Brown

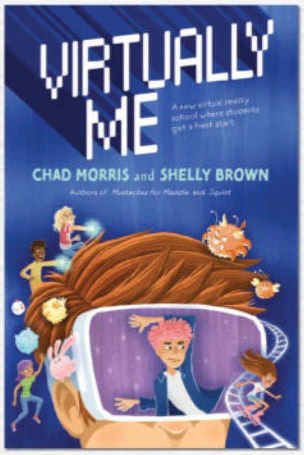
Using personalized avatars, a group of kids look for a fresh start in school when a virtual reality academy opens after a pandemic.

"Fascinating aspects. Humor and compassion. Beyond its wondrous simulations, at the heartfelt core of *Virtually Me* is the awkward, funny, and incomparable essence of being truly human."
—*Foreword Reviews*

"A classic 'be yourself' tale, with enough VR bells and whistles to keep tweens interested."
—*School Library Journal*

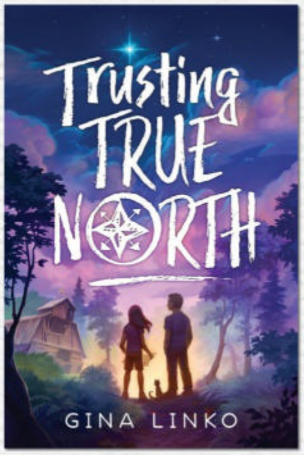
"Warmly supportive parents are a welcome bonus. A timely feel-good tale of learning to accept oneself and others."
—*Kirkus*

"Thought-provoking read. Emotional and insightful throughways to difficult conversations surrounding mental health."
—*Publishers Weekly*


VIRTUALLY ME
A new virtual reality school where students get a fresh start.
CHAD MORRIS and SHELLY BROWN
Authors of Mustaches for Maddie and Squint

From the bestselling authors of *Mustaches for Maddie and Squint.*

9781639930531/$16.99/HC
Ages 8-11 (Feb)



TRUSTING TRUE NORTH

Gina Linko

During a pandemic, with the adults so focused on the virus, True reasons that she must face all her problems on her own.

"A gentle narrative centered around a lockdown. True must make some very mature decisions and pay dearly for her wrong choices. This is a sincere and accurate portrayal of a potent time in the world, accurately reflecting the fear and insecurity the world felt before the discovery of vaccinations. Moves along at a tender pace and draws readers in with True's fears and strength as she navigates such vulnerability."
—*School Library Journal*

"A sweet story...well told. Many youngsters will relate to the problems True has to face."
—*San Francisco Book Review*

9781629729916/$16.99/HC
Ages 8-12 New!

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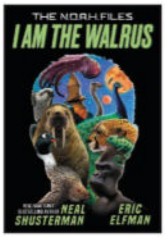
I Am the Walrus.

By Neal Shusterman and Eric Elfman.

Apr. 2023. 400p. Little, Brown, $17.99 (9780759555242). Gr. 5–8.

The coauthors of the Accelerati Trilogy kick off an equally head-spinning sf series starring seemingly ordinary middle-schooler Noah Prime. Noah finds himself caught between rival groups of space aliens wearing creepy, ill-fitting human skins after discovering his useful but hard-to-control ability to take on the characteristics of any animal. As he works to stay alive and uncaptured, he finds allies in smart-mouthed little sister Andi, autistic best friend Ogden, and take-no-prisoners classmate Sahara—all of whom prove to have unusual abilities of their own. Unfortunately, it turns out that the fate of all life on Earth is at stake, and Noah might just have to give up his own life to save everyone else. In this first volume alone, the authors tuck in really big stakes, time travel, fiery explosions, sudden deaths, a monster-alien jailbreak, black ops (human and otherwise), flights to locales from from Iowa to Tibet, high tech, and low humor. And that's not to mention the throwaway pop-culture references ("Klaatu barada nikto," one escapee declaims) and an involuntary penguin mating dance. Events tie off (fairly) neatly, but readers who fasten their tusks on this opener won't want to let go until the next one swims by. —*John Peters*

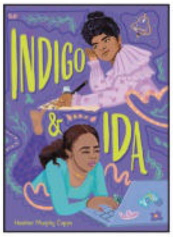


Indigo and Ida.

By Heather Murphy Capps.

Apr. 2023. 312p. Carolrhoda, $19.99 (9781728467689). Gr. 5–8.

Indigo, a biracial Minnesotan eighth-grader and aspiring journalist, deliberately vandalizes school property to get detention in this moving and inspiring debut that champions fighting against injustice. Her best friends, Abbie and Manning, have ditched her for the school's popular group, and Indigo hopes that they'll be so impressed with her getting detention, they'll want to be friends again. But then Indigo finds a book about Ida B. Wells in detention that includes letters with Wells' personal notes written in the book's margins, and she's inspired to investigate her school's unfair disciplinary policies when it comes to BIPOC students: only students of color, like her, are being sent to detention. Indigo also runs for student council president even though she's furious that Manning is running against her. In a secondary story line, community protests begin at the Minneapolis hospital where her doctor parents work after a Black man with mental health issues is denied treatment by a white doctor—a friend of Indigo's family. The book provides well-rounded glimpses into the lives of other characters, like Indigo's neurodivergent little brother and Abbie's nonbinary younger sibling. Indigo is a relatable and sympathetic character, and the social justice issues she champions at her school are timely and ring true. Readers will be inspired by Indigo's passion and compelled to read more about Wells, too. An author's note and discussion questions round things out. —*Sharon Rawlins*



It's Boba Time for Pearl Li!

By Nicole Chen.

Feb. 2023. 368p. HarperCollins/Quill Tree, $16.99 (9780063228610). Gr. 3–6.

Ever since Pearl visited a café in Taipei on a family trip, she's been smitten with amigurumi, a Japanese style of crocheting or knitting. Her techie parents encourage her to take up coding, like her sister Jade, while Kendall, the popular girl at school, dubs her creations "dolls." Besides her best friends Priya and Cindy, the only person who truly believes Pearl's amigurumi has merit is Auntie Cha, the shop owner of her refuge, Boba Time. When the shop is under threat of closing, Pearl sees an opportunity to test her amigurumi skills. Can selling her art save her favorite shop? Pearl's drive to prove herself to her parents thrusts her unsteadily into the job market and its very real struggles: balancing work and family, money management, even the pitfalls of turning your passion into your job. Pearl grapples with the contradiction of being both selfless and selfish, eventually coming to acknowledge the people around her and how she's underestimated them. Ultimately, finding and using her voice isn't as scary as she suspected. —*Mahjabeen Syed*

Julia and the Shark.

By Kiran Millwood Hargrave. Illus. by Tom de Freston.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Union Square Kids, $18.99 (9781454948681). Gr. 4–7.

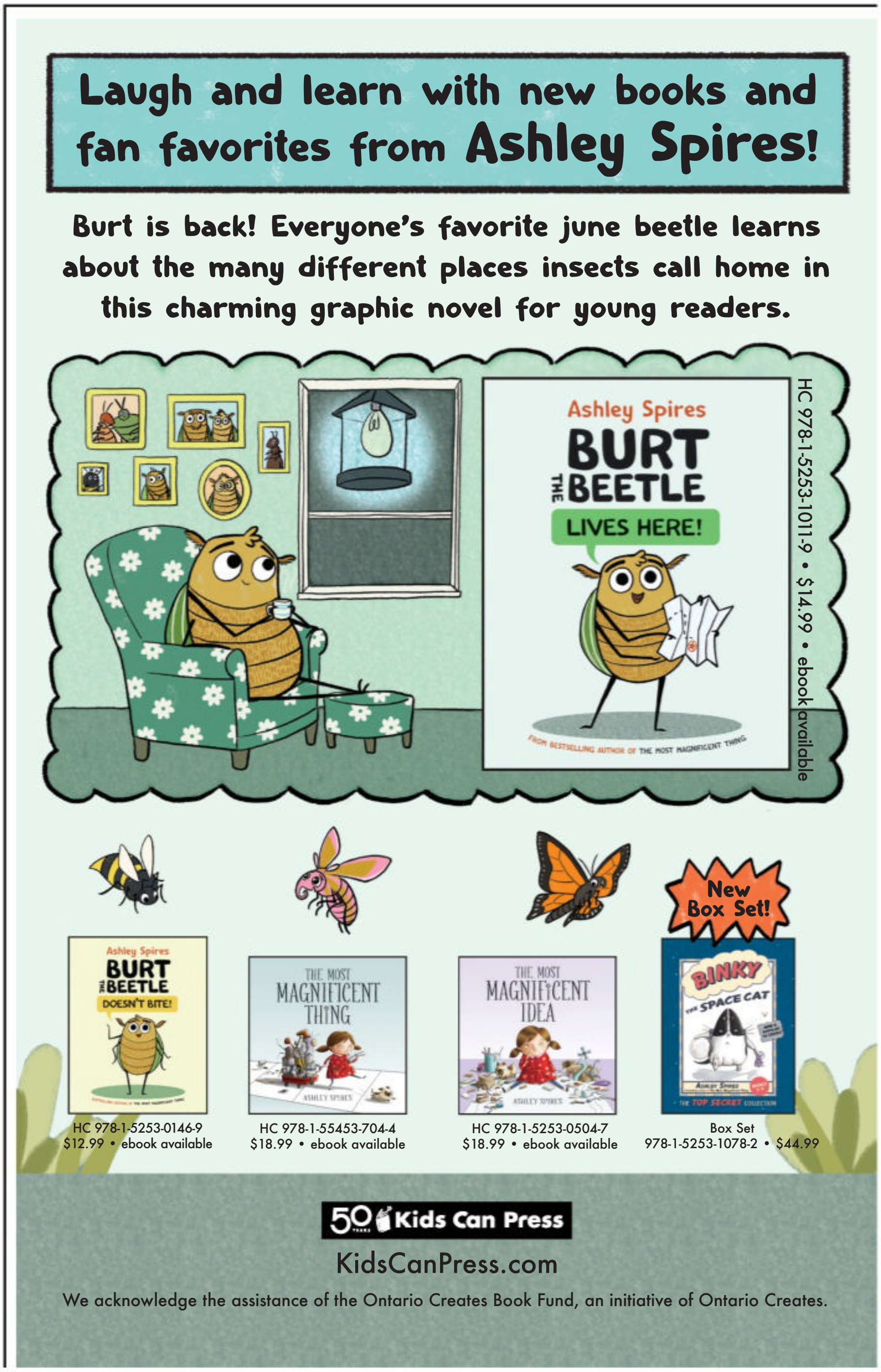
Rather than a white whale, the characters in Hargrave's new novel are chasing a whale-sized shark. Julia and her parents (and cat, Noodle) are spending the summer on a remote Shetland island so that her father can repair its lighthouse and her mother, Maura, can get a tracker on an elusive Greenland shark to secure funding for an ambitious research project. There's not a lot for Julia to do, but she forms a rocky friendship with a local boy, Kin, and clings to hope that her mother will take her out on the sea. Julia greatly admires her mother, yet, while they're on the island, Maura's passion grows into reckless obsession, which Julia struggles to reckon with. Pensive and poignant, *Julia and the Shark* falls readily in line with Ali Benjamin's *The Thing about Jellyfish* (2015) and Kate Allen's *The Line Tender* (2019) in its examination of grief and mental health. Poetic shifts in the text and collage-like illustrations—grayscale with yellow accents—add to the story's loveliness. Discussions of bipolar disorder and suicide are present and handled well. —*Julia Smith*

Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu.

By Maisie Chan. Illus. by Natelle Quek

Mar. 2023. 256p. Abrams/Amulet, $18.99 (9781419759925). Gr. 4–6.

Struggling single-handedly in the wake of her grandmother's death to care for her increasingly abstracted wai gong (grandfather), Scottish Chinese orphan Lizzie finds herself undertaking a personal "journey to the west." Her grandmother has (posthumously) left, for Lizzie's twelfth birthday, a pair of tickets to a tea dance at the elegant Blackpool Tower Ballroom—the British hall where she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met Lizzie's grandfather—and so Lizzie and her grandfather embark. Chan infuses this warm and spirited road trip with references to Lizzie's cultural background (with light but pointed doses of racist bullying and fat shaming thrown in), plus an inclusive supporting cast. While the author also shoehorns in unexpected help from a matronly motorcycle gang and several other well-timed miracles to get her travelers from Glasgow to their destination, readers aren't likely to mind, as the suspenseful whirl of misadventures leads to a thoroughly dazzling climax on the dance floor. Some UK specificities permeate the text, especially in a final plot point, but this warm family story will still resonate this side of the pond. *—John Peters*

Lolo Weaver Swims Upstream.

By Polly Farquhar.

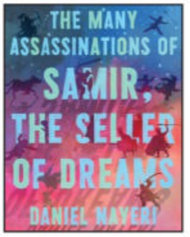
Apr. 2023. 240p. Holiday, $18.99 (9780823452095). Gr. 4–6.

Let's face it: 12-year-old Lolo is in a pickle. She's been remanded to summer school with mean Mrs. Cryer as her teacher. Meanwhile, her beloved grandfather, Papa, has died, and Grandma has surrendered his dog, Hank, to a fosterer, who places him at a farm on the other side of the lake. Determined to retrieve him, Lolo paddles across the lake to the farm. She is in the process of dognapping Hank when she's discovered by her classmate Noah, the new owner. The two fight over the dog until Noah tearfully gives up but insists on joining Lolo on the journey back. Once they're in the middle of the lake, some deus ex machina fireworks explode, frightening Hank, who jumps out of the boat, exposing himself to toxic algae. What else could possibly go wrong? Farquhar's novel is an agreeable read, although, frankly, Lolo is not always easy to like. Happily, Hank and Noah are sweethearts and carry the day and the book, which dog lovers will dote on. *—Michael Cart*

★ The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams.

By Daniel Nayeri. Illus. by Daniel Miyares.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Levine Querido, $21.99 (9781646143030). Gr. 5–8.



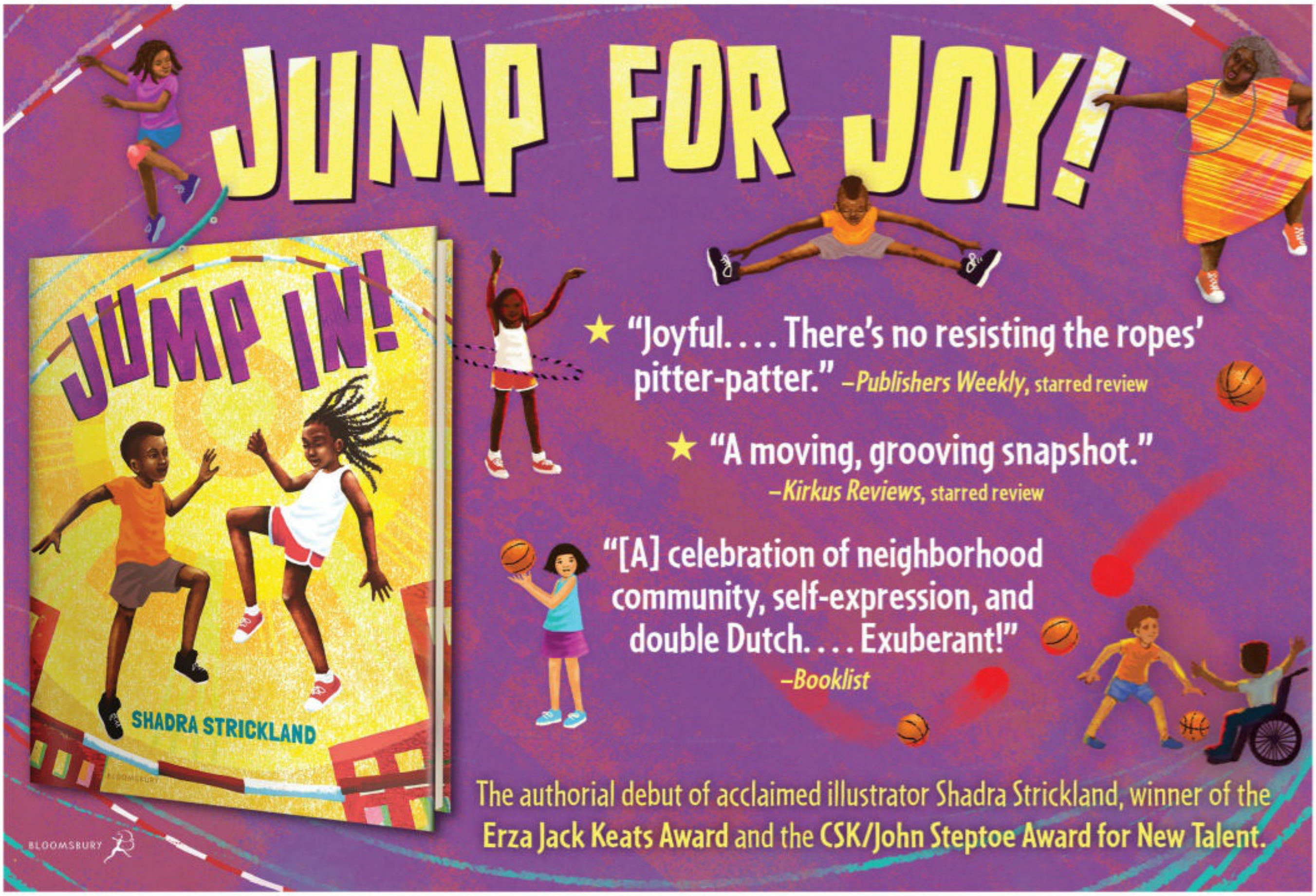
This tight little tome shares the testament of one orphan boy, dubbed Little Monkey following his rescue (and purchase) by the titular Samir, an incorrigibly jovial and conniving snake-oil merchant, whom—as the boy states up front—he has killed. As Monkey settles in with Samir's caravan, he comes to detest the endless bloviating, scheming, and swindling of the "Seller of Dreams," for whom trickery is not just a constant impulse but the paradigm through which he views the world. As such, there are many who want him dead, and on the journey east along the legendary Silk Road, Monkey elaborates on seven attempts on his master's life. Miyares' rich paintings, only a few here seen, precede each chapter, giving vivid shape to the figures but also endowing the story with a classic quality through a style hearkening to certain renditions of the Arabian Nights. Nayeri grounds the proceedings in Monkey's narration, and the boy proves to be a thoughtful and engaging guide through this simple yet sophisticated story. As Monkey works to save Samir from assassination, hoping to win his freedom in exchange, he takes an inner journey, exploring "the expansive nature of love" and ultimately finding something more than he expected. Readers, too, will find more than expected, including tender philosophies, complex characterizations, heaps of humor, a masterful twist, and most importantly, just a great story, beautifully told. *—Ronny Khuri*

Marya Khan and the Fabulous Jasmine Garden.

By Saadia Faruqi. Illus. by Ani Bushry.

Mar. 2023. 144p. Abrams/Amulet, $14.99 (9781419761188). Gr. 2–4.

With a brother in fifth grade and a sister in middle school, eight-year-old Marya finds it hard to be the youngest child, particularly when her father affectionately calls her "my baby girl." At school, her class is given responsibility for creating a school garden, and she volunteers to lead the project. So does her next-door neighbor Alexa, who continually tries to befriend Marya but succeeds only in annoying her. Then their teacher appoints them as coleaders. While the garden project has its ups and downs, Marya can't help notic-


JUMP FOR JOY!
JUMP IN!
SHADRA STRICKLAND
BLOOMSBURY

★ "Joyful. . . . There's no resisting the ropes' pitter-patter." –*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "A moving, grooving snapshot." –*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"[A] celebration of neighborhood community, self-expression, and double Dutch. . . . Exuberant!" –*Booklist*

The authorial debut of acclaimed illustrator Shadra Strickland, winner of the Erza Jack Keats Award and the CSK/John Steptoe Award for New Talent.

BLOOMSBURY

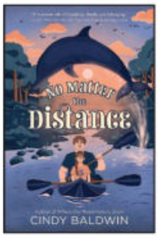
ing Alexa's strengths, and, gradually, she lets go of her long-standing hostility. Through interactions with her teacher, classmates, and family members, Marya learns that leadership is “more than just bossing everyone around.” In this sequel to *Marya Khan and the Incredible Henna Party* (2022), Faruqi continues her portrayal of an appealing Pakistani American girl who makes understandable mistakes but is willing to learn by observing others. Lively and opinionated, Marya's first-person narrative is consistently entertaining, and the many attractive grayscale illustrations add another dimension to this transitional chapter book. —*Carolyn Phelan*

★ No Matter the Distance.

By Cindy Baldwin.

Feb. 2023. 368p. HarperCollins/Quill Tree, $16.99 (9780063006447). Gr. 4–7.

People are always telling Penny how lucky she is, and usually she agrees. She's got a great family, an awesome best friend in Cricket, and a house on a creek that's perfect for swimming. While Penny lives with cystic fibrosis, she leads a pretty regular life, even if she does need to take extra medicines and do her breathing treatments. But right now, it's sixth-grade spring break, she's healthy, she's excited to enter the sixth-grade poetry contest, and she has an amazing secret: there's a dolphin hanging around their dock. Then everything changes. Cricket's family is moving away, Penny can't get her poem started, it turns out that Rose, as Penny has named the dolphin, may have swum this far inland because she's sick, and Penny's not feeling all that great, either. This first-person novel in verse allows Penny to explain about cystic fibrosis and how she feels about having it, while also helping readers understand the special connections Penny feels with both Cricket and Rose. All this positive empathy is wrapped around a fast-paced story with fully developed characters. The realistic but happy ending proves that some friendships are meant to last, no matter the distance. —*Kathleen McBroom*



★ Sherlock Holmes: The Final Problem.

By Arthur Conan Doyle. Illus. by Hannes Binder.

Apr. 2023. 56p. NorthSouth, $18.95 (9780735844889). Gr. 4–7.

Sherlock Holmes arrives at Dr. Watson's office and confides that he has set in motion a plan that will soon thwart his archenemy, Professor Moriarty, “a genius of evil, the Napoleon of crime,” whose henchmen have tried to kill Holmes three times that day. Holmes and Watson embark on a journey through the Continent, hoping to elude Moriarty. “Based on a story by Arthur Conan Doyle,” this version of the tale features a text that has been sensibly abridged for young people reading the story 130 years after its first publication. Though simpler than the original tale, it retains elements of Conan Doyle's writing style as well as many details from the story. A Swiss illustrator known for his distinctive scratchboard technique, Binder contributes a series of striking black-and-white illustrations created with bold, repeated lines. Text and art combine to create a menacing atmosphere leading up to the mysterious events at the Reichenbach Falls, where evidence leads Watson to conclude that Holmes and his nemesis, Professor Moriarty, have plunged to their deaths. An appended note explains that though Conan Doyle killed off his immensely popular character within this story, he later “resurrected” Holmes. A respectful adaptation of the classic story, illustrated with skill and finesse. —*Carolyn Phelan*

SHERLOCK HOLMES
THE FINAL PROBLEM

The Sister Switch.

By Sarah Mlynowski and Debbie Rigaud. Illus. by Maxine Vee.

Apr. 2023. 192p. Scholastic, $15.99 (9781338628289). Gr. 3–5.

Addie Asante, a fifth-grader, is the middle child between Sophie, a high-achieving seventh-grader, and Camille, an energetic member of the PreK class at her sisters' school. One morning, Addie opens a package con-

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taining a bracelet that she slips onto her wrist without reading the warning *not* to make a wish while wearing it. Fed up with her siblings, she arrives at school and wishes she wasn't in the middle between her sisters. Immediately, she transforms into Sophie, whose teacher waves her into a seventh-grade classroom. Meanwhile, Camille finds herself looking like Addie and enjoying fifth grade, while Sophie-as-Camille looks miserable in PreK. Attractive grayscale illustrations portray the main characters within their family and at their school. Using a body switch to enlighten characters about others' viewpoints isn't new, but the writing here provides welcome humor as well as insights. And while the bracelet adds a spark of magic, Addie's first-person narrative is primarily realistic, particularly when portraying the three sisters. Book two in the Best Wishes series is engaging and fun. —*Carolyn Phelan*

A Spoonful of Time.

By Flora Ahn. Illus. by Jenny Park.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Quirk, $16.99 (9781683693185); e-book, $9.99 (9781683693192). Gr. 3–6.

Korean American Maya is surprised to learn that her grandmother, who's in the early stages of dementia, has the remarkable ability to travel back in time to her own memories by eating or making foods that formed part of that memory. Once Maya gets used to the idea, she begins to wonder if she can use this special ability to relive memories with her deceased father while also learning more about her Korean culture and heritage through foods and her grandmother's memories. Ahn's accounts of the memories themselves create a nostalgic atmosphere as they unfold before Maya's eyes. In exploring her grandmother's past, Maya is able to learn about herself, reflect on her relationship with her mother, and gain a more solid sense of where she comes from. This beautifully written book includes some recipes for the foods that Maya and her grandmother prepare in the story, and the descriptions of the dishes are tantalizing enough that readers might appreciate the ability to recreate them at home. A warm and satisfying intergenerational story. —*Kristina Pino*

The Storyteller.

By Brandon Hobson.

May 2023. 224p. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338797268). Gr. 4–6.

Sixth-grader Ziggy Echota suffers from anxiety, the result of his Cherokee mother's mysterious disappearance some 10 years before. He has heard tales of the Nunnehi (spirits that tell stories and protect other Cherokees) from his grandmother and his older sister, Moon. To learn more about his mother and her demise, he asks his classmate Alice to help him find the secret caves located in the New Mexico desert near their homes that his mom loved to explore. Hobson's fantasy features a folkloric setting (Poisonberry, named for the ubiquitous red fruits lethal to non-Cherokees), a mix of real and fantastic characters (including Gus, a fiddle-playing buzzard, and an armadillo channeling Andrew Jackson), and one long night of adventures. While most chapters could stand alone as self-contained stories, and Ziggy's need to cite all the things he has learned from his adventures feels didactic, readers will be happy that he moves beyond his grief (and hopefully the anxiety it has caused him), opting instead to learn and share stories of his mother's life. —*Kay Weisman*

What Stays Buried.

By Suzanne Young.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Harper, $16.99 (9780063257122). Gr. 5–8.

Twelve-year-old Calista Wynn is a latchkey kid living in the marshy town of Meadowmere, New York. So far, so normal—right? But Calista can see dead people. She comes from a long line of mediums on her father's side; however, once they turn 13, their supernatural abilities dissipate. Her fear of losing her helpful gifts intensifies in the week prior to her birthday. To add icing to the cake, a "tall lady" begins to murder children and haunt Calista's little sister, Molly. Calista works to stop the demonic being from terrorizing her town and loved ones while also discovering family secrets. From the author of the YA series Program, this horror-saturated fantasy delivers a heart-palpitating adventure. Additionally, Young focuses on the intense pressures adults can put on children: Calista is depicted raising her sister and making extra money while Mom is at work. Readers will observe how fear can make people behave strangely, to the point of bearing burdens alone, and will recognize how problems can be remedied with the help of family and friends. —*Beronica Garcia*

When Impossible Happens.

By Jane De Suza.

Apr. 2023. 176p. Putnam, $17.99 (9780593530122). Gr. 3–6.

An almost-9-year-old girl recounts the early COVID-19 lockdown period in India and solves a crime while grieving her grandmother in this middle-grade novel. Swara does not believe that her grandmother is truly gone; she's simply missing, likely in hiding, and Swara must hunt down the clues to find her. This coping mechanism for grief manifests in her obsession with the flashing lights across the street in the sari shop, and she enlists her friends, neighbors, and family in helping her get to the bottom of it. Told in short chapters, this is a pandemic book that features grief but doesn't drown in it. In this much-needed fictional account of a non-American country during lockdown, De Suza perfectly captures the voice of an overeager nine-year-old, with tones of *The Westing Game*'s Turtle Wexler and a sweet, interwoven story about how hard grief can be to combat. While the plot is not evenly distributed between grief and mystery, young readers eager for longer chapter books and international stories will enjoy stepping into Swara's shoes. —*Aryssa Damron*

The Windeby Puzzle: History and Story.

By Lois Lowry. Illus. by Jonathan Stroh.

Feb. 2023. 224p. Clarion, $16.99 (9780358672500). Gr. 5–8.

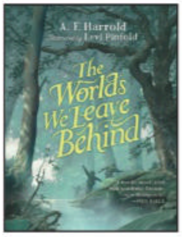
There are two sides to this book: In one, it shares the true story of an ancient body dug up from a north German peat bog in 1952. In the other, Lowry asks what might be the true tale of the bog discovery, and she imagines two fictional lives in the pondering of that story. In this unusual approach, she outlines the process of both wondering and writing, fleshing out possibilities for what befell the discovered Iron Age teen. Was the person in the bog male or female? Were they murdered or simply an accidental victim? Slowly, a picture emerges of the tough lives of these pre-Christian people, of how growing up within tight cultural confines could position some as outsiders. In the fictional portion, Estrild is a feisty girl who would prefer to be a warrior than do domestic chores. Her friend Varick is a disabled orphan scraping by in a community that ostracizes him. Which of these two unlikely friends was ultimately forgotten in the German swamp? Interspersing their stories with historical facts and info about the real bog discovery, now called Windeby I, and with news of anthropological advances, Lowry creates a mystery appealing to history lovers. —*Karen Cruze*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Two-time Newbery medalist Lowry is something of a living legend, and the unusual approach of this latest historical fiction should draw interest.

The Worlds We Leave Behind.

By A. F. Harrold. Illus. by Levi Pinfold.

Feb. 2023. 256p. Bloomsbury, $17.99 (9781547610952). Gr. 5–8.



Literal otherworldliness is a hallmark of Harrold's works, and in this novel, it takes the form of an old woman (Missus), her huge dog (Leafy), and their cabin in a thin strip of woods. Elsewhere in the woods, three kids are playing on an old rope swing. The two boys, Hex and Tommo, are inseparable, and they're both annoyed when little-kid Sasha invites herself along to the swing. A trickle of meanness enters Hex as Sasha takes her turn, prompting him to throw a stone that knocks the girl into the rocky creek bed below with a painful *crunch*. This is the key event that brings Missus and Leafy into the lives of Hex, Tommo, and Sasha's furious older sister, Maria. They find the old woman in different ways and at different points in time, but to each she makes the same offer: she and Leafy can give them justice or revenge by snipping a problematic person out of the world, erasing their entire existence. Harrold's narrative spans only five days and packs a philosophical punch as the characters ponder the consequences of their choices. Still, there's plenty of action, and the sinister atmosphere gets a fantastic visual boost from Pinfold's realistic, grayscale illustrations, which creep along page borders and occasionally fill consecutive spreads. Taken together, it's haunting stuff. An impeccably crafted, cerebral fantasy. —*Julia Smith*

Spring 2023

Youth Preview

by Kelly Ferreira

This announcement section offers readers a selected preview of notable new titles for young-adult, middle-grade, and young readers. All titles will be published in the spring or summer 2023 seasons.

Young Adult

Nonfiction

Banned Books: The Controversy over What Students Read. By Meryl Loonin. ReferencePoint, lib. ed., $32.95 (9781678204747). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

Big Bangs and Black Holes: A Graphic Novel Guide to the Universe. By Jérémie Francfort. Art by HERJI. Tr. by Jeffrey K. Butt. Helvetiq, $24.99 (9783907293751). Gr. 7–12. May.

The Bones of Birka: Unraveling the Mystery of a Female Viking Warrior. By C. M. Surrisi. Chicago Review, $19.99 (9781641607063). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

But She Looks Fine: From Illness to Activism. By Olivia Goodreau. Histria/Gaudium, $24.99 (9781592112104). Gr. 9–12. May.

The Corporatization of America. By Avery Elizabeth Hurt. Greenhaven, lib. ed., $50.43 (9781534509245). Gr. 9–12. May.

Family Style: Memories of an American from Vietnam. By Thien Pham. Art by the author. First Second, paper, $17.99 (9781250809728). Gr. 9–12. June.

Hidden Systems: Water, Electricity, the Internet, and the Secrets behind the Systems We Use Every Day. By Dan Nott. Art by the author. Random/RH Graphic, $23.99 (9780593125366). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

Men of the 65th: The Borinqueneers of the Korean War. By Talia Aikens-Nuñez. Lerner/Zest, lib. ed., $37.32 (9781728449623). Gr. 7–12. May.

Questions Explored (series). ReferencePoint/BrightPoint. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.95. Five-title set price, $164.75. Gr. 7–12. Spring.

Reproductive Rights. By Scientific American Editors. Rosen/Scientific American, lib. ed., $43.95 (9781725349407). Gr. 9–12. May.

Roads to Family: All the Ways We Come to Be. By Rachel HS Ginocchio. Lerner/Twenty-First Century, lib. ed., $37.32 (9781728424545). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

The Secret Life of the Flying Squirrel. By Laurence Pringle. Illus. by Kate Garchinsky. Astra/Astra Young Readers, $17.99 (9781635925296). Gr. 6–9. Apr.

Share Better and Stress Less: A Guide to Thinking Ecologically about Social Media. By Whitney Phillips. Illus. by Ryan Milner. Candlewick/MITeen, $19.99 (9781536228748). Gr. 9–12. Mar.

Sunshine. By Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Art by the author. Scholastic/Graphix, paper, $14.99 (9781338356311). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

Writing in Color: Fourteen Writers on the Lessons We've Learned. Ed. by Nafiza Azad and Melody Simpson. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, $19.99 (9781665925648). Gr. 9–12. Aug.

You: The Story; A Writer's Guide to Craft through Memory. By Ruta Sepetys. Viking, $19.99 (9780593524381). Gr. 9–12. May.

Fiction

Ahiahia the Orphan. By Levi Illuitok. Art by Nate Wells. Inhabit, $19.95 (9781772274431). Gr. 8–12. Apr.

The Alchemy of Moonlight. By David Ferraro. Page Street, $18.99 (9781645679721). Gr. 8–12. May.

The Art of Being a Vampire. By Kate Karyus Quinn. Enslow/West 44, lib. ed., $25.80 (9781978596702). Gr. 9–12. Aug.

Associate Professor Akira Takatsuki's Conjecture, v.1: Folklore Studies. By Mikage Sawamura. Yen/Yen On, paper, $15 (9781975352974). Gr. 7–12. May.

Big Bad Me. By Aislinn O'Loughlin. Little Island, paper, $12.95 (9781915071040). Gr. 9–12. Apr.

The Book of Denial. By Ricardo Chávez Castañeda. Illus. by Alejandro Magallanes. Tr. by Lawrence Schimel. Enchanted Lion/Unruly, $24.95 (9781592703623). Gr. 8–12. June.

Boundless: Twenty Voices Celebrating Multicultural and Multiracial Identities. Ed. by Ismée Williams and Rebecca Balcárcel. Harlequin/Inkyard, $18.99 (9781335428615). Gr. 8–12. June.

Call the Name of the Night, v.1. By Tama Mitsuboshi. Art by the author. Yen, paper, $13 (9781975352004). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

Chasing Pacquiao. By Rod Pulido. Viking, $18.99 (9780593526736). Gr. 7–12. May.

Chloe and the Kaishao Boys. By Mae Coyiuto. Illus. by the author. Putnam, $18.99 (9780593461631). Gr. 8–12. Mar.

City of Vicious Night. By Claire Winn. Flux, paper, $14.99 (9781635830842). Gr 9–12. May.

The Coldest Winter I Ever Spent. By Ann Jacobus. Carolrhoda/Lab, lib. ed., $19.99 (9781728423951). Gr. 8–12. Mar.

Constellations. By Kate Glasheen. Art by the author. Holiday, paper, $22.99 (9780823450718). Gr. 9–12. May.

Cosmoknights: Book Two. By Hannah Templar. Art by the author. Top Shelf, paper, $24.99 (9781603095112). Gr. 8–12. May.

Dark Gathering, v.1. By Kenichi Kondo. Art by the author. VIZ Media/Shonen Jump, paper, $9.99 (9781974738946). Gr. 7–12. May.

Dear Medusa. By Olivia A. Cole. Random/Labyrinth Road, $18.99 (9780593485736). Gr. 9–12. Mar.

Different for Boys. By Patrick Ness. Illus. by Tea Bendix. Candlewick/Walker, $18.99 (9781536228892). Gr. 9–12. Mar.

Enter the Body. By Joy McCullough. Dutton, $18.99 (9780593406755). Gr. 9–12. Mar.

Escape '56. By Richard Panchyk. Seven Stories/Triangle Square, paper, $16.95 (9781644212530). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

Eve: Children of the Moon. By Victor LaValle. Art by Jo Mi-Gyeong. Boom! Studios, paper, $17.99 (9781684159048). Gr. 8–12. Aug.

Forever Is Now. By Mariama J. Lockington. Farrar, $19.99 (9780374388881). Gr. 7–12. May.

Forget Me Not. By Alyson Derrick. Simon & Schuster, $19.99 (9781665902373). Gr. 9–12. Apr.

Funeral Songs for Dying Girls. By Cherie Dimaline. Tundra, $17.99 (9780735265639). Gr. 9–12. Apr.

The Girls from Hush Cabin. By Marie Hoy-Kenny. Blackstone, $18.99 (9798200877751). Gr. 9–12. Aug.

Grim. By Sara B. Elfgren. Illus. by Judith Kiros. Arctis, $20 (9781646900305). Gr. 8–12. Mar.

Guardians of Dawn: Zhara. By S. Jae-Jones. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $20 (9781250191427). Gr. 8–12. Aug.

Gunhild, v.1. By Fred Tornager. Art by the author. Quarto/Rockport, paper, $13.99 (9780760381915). Gr. 6–9. Apr.

Hex Americana. By Bree Wolf. Art by the author. Iron Circus, paper, $15 (9781945820762). Gr. 9–12. Aug.

The Horizon, v.1. By JH. Art by the author. Yen/Ize, paper, $20 (9798400900297). Gr. 10–12. June.

House of Roots and Ruin. By Erin Craig. Delacorte, $19.99 (9780593482544). Gr. 7–12. July.

House Party. Ed. by Justin A. Reynolds. Random/Joy Revolution, $18.99 (9780593488157). Gr. 7–12. June.

Hungry Ghost. By Victoria Ying. Art by the author. First Second, paper, $17.99 (9781250767004). Gr. 9–12. Apr.

I Kick and I Fly. By Ruchira Gupta. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338825091). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

Infested. By Angel Luis Colón. Simon & Schuster/MTV, $19.99 (9781665928410). Gr. 9–12. July.

Into the Light. By Mark Oshiro. Tor Teen, $19.99 (9781250812254). Gr. 8–12. Mar.

Invisible Son. By Kim Johnson. Random, $18.99 (9780593482100). Gr. 9–12. June.

Kismat Connection. By Ananya Devarajan. Harlequin/Inkyard, $18.99 (9781335453686). Gr. 8–12. June.

Last Canto of the Dead. By Daniel José Older. Disney/Rick Riordan Presents, $18.99 (9781368070904). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

Last Sunrise in Eterna. By Amparo Ortiz. Page Street, $18.99 (9781645676140). Gr. 8–12. Mar.

Lion's Legacy. By L. C. Rosen. Union Square, $18.99 (9781454948056). Gr. 7–12. May.

Love and Gravity. By Ari North. Art by the author. little bee/Yellow Jacket, $24.99 (9781499812794). Gr. 6–9. May.

Love and Other Wicked Things. By Philline Harms. Wattpad, paper, $12.99 (9781990259944) Gr. 8–12. Aug.

Lucha of the Night Forest. By Tehlor Kay Mejia. Random/Make Me a World, $18.99 (9780593378366). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

The Making of Yolanda la Bruja. By Lorraine Avila. Levine Querido/Arthur A. Levine, $19.99 (9781646142439). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

Miles Morales Suspended. By Jason Reynolds. Illus. by Zeke Peña. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy $19.99 (9781665918466). Gr. 7–12. May.

The Moonlit Vine. By Elizabeth Santiago. Illus. by McKenzie Mayle. Lee & Low/Tu, $22.95 (9781643795805). Gr. 8–12. May.

Nigeria Jones. By Ibi Zoboi. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $19.99 (9780062888846). Gr. 8–12. May.

Our Vengeful Souls. By Kristi McManus. CamCat, $19.99 (9780744308914). Gr. 8–12. June.

Paper Planes. By Jennie Wood. Art by Dozerdraws. Maverick, paper, $14.99 (9781952303548). Gr. 8–12. May.

Promises Stronger than Darkness. By Charlie Jane Ander. Tor Teen, $19.99 (9781250317506). Gr. 8–12. Apr.

Promposal. By RaeChell Garrett. Little, Brown/Poppy, $18.99 (9780316371704). Gr. 7–12. Apr.

Ride or Die. By Gail-Agnes Musikavanhu. Soho Teen, $18.99 (9781641294201). Gr. 9–12. June.

Riley Weaver Needs a Date to the Gaybutante Ball. By Jason June. HarperTeen, $19.99 (9780063260030). Gr. 9–12. May.

Rook. By Will Ritter. Algonquin, $18.99 (9781643752402). Gr. 7–12. Aug.

Secret Me. By Angel Jendrick. Lorimer, $27.99 (9781459417250). Gr. 8–12. Aug.

Shadow Sister. By Lily Meade. Sourcebooks/Fire, $18.99 (9781728264479). Gr. 8–12. June.

A Spark in the Cinders. By Jenny Elder Moke. Disney/Hyperion, $18.99 (9781368039918). Gr. 7–12. May.

Standing on Neptune. By Valerie Sherrard. Cormorant/DCB, paper, $16.95 (9781770866874). Gr. 9–12. Apr.

Strange Alliances. By Nie Jun. Art by the author. Lerner/Graphic Universe, lib. ed., $29.32 (9781541597853). Gr. 7–12. May.

Summer People. By Sara Hosey. CamCat, $19.99 (9780744302509). Gr. 9–12. Aug.

The Third Daughter. By Adrienne Tooley. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $18.99 (9780316465694). Gr. 9–12. July.

Threads That Bind. By Kika Hatzopoulou. Razorbill, $19.99 (9780593528716). Gr. 9–12. June.

Tim Te Maro and the Subterranean Heartsick Blues. By H. S. Valley. Hardie Grant, paper, $12.99 (9781760508753). Gr. 7–12. Feb.

Tombs: Junji Ito Story Collection. By Junji Ito. Art by the author. VIZ Signature, $22.99 (9781974736041). Gr. 7–12. Mar.

Venom & Vow. By Anna-Marie McLemore and Elliott McLemore. Macmillan/Feiwel and Friends, $19.99 (9781250822239). Gr. 8–12. May.

A Warning about Swans. By R. M. Romero. Peachtree Teen, $18.99 (9781682634837). Gr. 9–12. July.

Warrior Girl Unearthed. By Angeline Boulley. Holt, $19.99 (9781250766588). Gr. 9–12. May.

When It All Syncs Up. By Maya Ameyaw. Annick, $19.99 (9781773217819). Gr. 9–12. June.

Whistleblower. By Kate Marchant. Wattpad, paper, $12.99 (9781989365083) Gr. 8–12. Mar.

The Wicked Unseen. By Gigi Griffis. Delacorte/Underlined, paper, $10.99 (9780593644102). Gr. 7–12. June.

Wolf Girl and Black Prince, v.1. By Ayuko Hatta. Art by the author. VIZ Media/Shojo Beat, paper, $9.99 (9781974737529). Gr. 7–12. May.

Wynd Book 3: The Throne in the Sky. By James Tynion IV. Art by Michael Dialynas. Boom! Box, paper, $14.99 (9781684159154). Gr. 8–12. Aug.

You're Not Supposed to Die Tonight. By Kalynn Bayron. Bloomsbury YA, $19.99 (9781547611546). Gr. 9–12. June.

Middle Grade

Nonfiction

101 Things to Do on a Walk. By Lonely Planet Kids. Lonely Planet, $14.99 (9781838695989). Gr. 4–7. Apr.

Absolutely Everything. By Christopher Lloyd. Illus. by Andy Forshaw. What on Earth?, $27 (9781804660768). Gr. 1–6. Aug.

Active Minds: Kids Ask About (series). Phoenix International/Sequoia Kids. Individual titles, lib. ed., $24.69. Eight-title set price, $197.52. Gr. 2–4. Spring.

All Bodies Are Wonderful. By Beth Cox. Illus. by Samantha Meredith. Skyhorse/Sky Pony, $12.99 (9781510775091). Gr. 2–5. Aug.

Am I Made of Stardust? Dr. Maggie Answers the Big Questions for Young Scientists. By Maggie Aderin-Pocock. Illus. by Chelen Écija. Kane Miller, $16.99 (978168463844). Gr. 3–6. Mar.

American Alligator vs. Wild Boar. By Nathan Sommer. Bellwether/Torque, lib. ed., $26.95 (9798886871647). Gr. 3–7. Jan.

Ancient Marine Life (series). Bellwether. Individual titles, lib. ed., $26.95. Six-title set price, $161.70. Gr. 3–7. Spring.

Animal Factopia. By Julie Beer. Illus. by Andy Smith. Britannica, $14.99 (9781913750732). Gr. 2–6. Apr.

Animal Ghost Stories (series). Mitchell Lane. Individual titles, lib. ed., $35.71. Six-title set price, $214.26. Gr. 2–4. Spring.

Animals around the World: South America (series). Mitchell Lane/EZ Readers. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.86. Six-title set price, $197.16. Gr. 2–4. Spring.

Any Body: A Comic Compendium of Important Facts and Feelings about Our Bodies. By Katharina von der Gathen. Art by Anke Kuhl. Gecko, $19.99 (9781776574988). Gr. 3–8. May.

The Ashe Brothers: How Arthur and Johnnie Changed Tennis Forever. By Judy Allen Dodson. Illus. by David Wilkerson. Capstone, $18.99 (9781684464807). Gr. 2–4. Jan.

Astonishing and Extinct Professions: Coffee Smellers, Gladiators and Other Unbelievable Professions that Really Existed. By Markus Rottmann. Illus. by Michael Meister. Tr. by Ashley Curtis. Helvetiq, $24.99 (9783907293935). Gr. 4–7. Aug.

The Best Way to Get Your Way. By Tanya Lloyd-Kyi. Illus. by Chanelle Nibbelink. Kids Can, $18.99 (9781525305481). Gr. 3–7. May.

The Big Little Book of Awesome Stuff: 300 Wild Facts, Fun Projects & Amazing Tricks. By Dan Bova. Illus. by Russell Shaw. Hearst Home, $23 (9781950785773). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Biphobia: Deal with It and Be More than a Bystander. By Gordon Nore. Lorimer, $24.95 (9781459417212). Gr. 4–7. Aug.

Birds of Our Land. By Virginia W. Dyke. Illus. by Robin Gowen. Cassava Republic, $16.95 (9781913175436). Gr. 2–5. Feb.

Birds of Prey (series). Black Rabbit/Bolt. Individual titles, lib. ed., $35.70. Six-title set price, $214.20. Gr. 4–6. Spring.

Body Systems (series). ABDO/Kids Core. Individual titles, lib. ed., $34.22. Eight-title set price, $273.76. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

The Book of Time: Adventures in the Past, Present, Future, and Beyond. By Clive Gifford. Illus. by Teo Georgiev. Quarto/words & pictures, $24.99 (9780711279575). Gr. 3–6. Aug.

Born Reading: 20 Stories of Women Reading Their Way into History. By Kathleen Krull and Virginia Loh-Hagen. Illus. by Aura Lewis. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, $19.99 (9781665917988). Gr. 3–7. Aug.

Boundless. By Chaunte Lowe. Scholastic/Focus, $18.99 (9781338741520). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Brainpower (series). Jump!/Blue Owl. Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Four-title set price, $75.80. Gr. 2–3. Spring.

The Brilliant Calculator: How Mathematician Edith Clarke Helped Electrify America. By Jan Lower. Illus. by Susan Reagan. Astra/Calkins Creek, $18.99 (9781662680069). Gr. 2–5. Mar.

Can You Believe It's True? (series). Crabtree/Branches. Individual titles, $22.95. Six-title set price, $137.70. Gr. 5–8. Spring.

Can't Get Enough Dog Stuff. By Moira Rose Donohue and Stephaine Gibeault. National Geographic, paper, $14.99 (9781426373770). Gr. 2–5. Mar.

A Cat's Guide to the Night's Sky. By Atkinson Stuart. Illus. by Kearney Brendan. Laurence King, paper, $12.99 (9781510230569). Gr. 2–4. May.

A Child's Introduction to Hip Hop: The Beats, Rhymes, and Roots of a Musical Revolution. By Jordannah Elizabeth. Illus. by Markia Jenai. Black Dog & Leventhal, $21.99 (9780762481026). Gr. 3–7. Aug.

Climate Warriors: Fourteen Scientists and Fourteen Ways We Can Save Our Planet. By Laura Gehl. Lerner/Millbrook, lib. ed., $33.32 (9781728460406). Gr. 4–8. Apr.

Craft to Career (series). ABDO/ABDO & Daughters. Individual titles, lib. ed., $35.64. Six-title set price, $213.84. Gr. 5–9. Spring.

Crafts in a Snap! (series). Bearport/Create! Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Six-title set price, $113.70. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

Creative Sports: A History of Hoops (series). Creative Company. Individual titles, lib. ed., $35.70. 30-title set price, $1071. Gr. 3–6. Spring.

Cultures of the World (Fourth Edition, Group 4) (series). Cavendish Square. Individual titles, lib. ed., $49.21. Six-title set price, $295.26. Gr. 5–8. Spring.

Cyborgs, Genes and Tiny Machines: The Fantastic Future of Medicine! By Paul Ian Cross. Illus. by Steve Brown. Welbeck, paper, $7.95 (9781804535059). Gr. 2–5. July.

Daniela and History's Women Pirates. By Susanna Isern. Illus. by Gómez. NubeOcho, $19.99 (9788419253606). Gr. 1–5. June.

Deep, Deep Down: The Secret Underwater Poetry of the Mariana Trench. By Lydia Lukidis. Illus. by Juan Calle. Capstone, $18.99 (9781684466153). Gr. 2–4. Jan.

Disgustingly Delicious: The Surprising, Weird and Wonderful Food of the World. By Soledad Romero Marino. Illus. by Montse Galbany. Welbeck/Orange Mosquito, $17.95 (9781914519703). Gr. 2–5. Mar.

Earth's Incredible Places: Yellowstone. By Cath Ard. Illus. by Bianca Austria. Flying Eye, $21.99 (9781838748562). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

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Epic Animal Journeys: Navigation and Migration by Air, Land and Sea. By Ed Brown. Illus. by the author. Cicada, $22.99 (9781800660298). Gr. 3–6. May.

Explore Music (series). ABDO/DiscoverRoo. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.79. Six-title set price, $196.74. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

Exploring Civil Rights: The Rise (series). Scholastic. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32. Five-title set price, $160. Gr. 5–8. Spring.

Four Eyes. By Rex Ogle. Art by Dave Valeza. Scholastic/Graphix, $24.99 (9781338574975). Gr. 3–7. May.

A Great Game! (series). Norwood. Individual titles, lib. ed., $30.60. Four-title set price, $122.40. Gr. 3–5. Spring.

Hanging with Vampires: A Totally Factual Field Guide to the Supernatural. By Insha Fitzpatrick. Illus. by Lilla Bölecz. Quirk, paper, $14.99 (9781683693413). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Her Eyes on the Stars: Maria Mitchell, Astronomer. By Laurie Wallmark. Illus. by Liz Wong. Creston, $19.99 (9781954354135). Gr. 3–6. May.

Holiday History (series). Jump!/Pogo. Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Seven-title set price, $132.65. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

A Home for Every Plant: Wonders of the Botanical World. By Matthew Biggs. Illus. by Lucila Perini. Phaidon, $29.95 (9781838666972). Gr. 2–5. May.

How Old Is a Whale? Animal Life Spans from the Mayfly to the Immortal Jellyfish. By Lily Murray. Illus. by Jesse Hodgson. Candlewick/Big Picture, $21.99 (9781536229752). Gr. 1–4. Mar.

How the Sea Came to Be: And All the Creatures in It. By Jennifer Berne. Illus. by Amanda Hall. Eerdmans, $18.99 (9780802854780). Gr. 3–5. Apr.

Iconic Composers: A Celebration of Music's Extraordinary Composers. By Nick Csicsko and Emi Ferguson. Illus. by David Lee Csicsko. Trope, $24.99 (9781951963149). Gr. 5–8. June.

Insects around the World: Africa (series). Mitchell Lane/EZ Readers. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.86. Six-title set price, $197.16. Gr. 2–4. Spring.

Inside Big Events (series). The Child's World/Momentum. Individual titles, lib. ed., $34.21. Six-title set price, $205.26. Gr. 3–6. Spring.

Inside the World's Wonders. By Lonely Planet Kids. Lonely Planet, $19.99 (9781838699963). Gr. 4–7. Aug.

Intro to Chemistry: Need to Know (series). Bearport/SilverTip. Individual titles, lib. ed., $19.95. Six-title set price, $119.70. Gr. 5–7. Spring.

Investigating Body Systems (series). Crabtree/Forest. Individual titles, $24.95. Four-title set price, $99.80. Gr. 5–8. Spring.

It's Not Bragging If It's True: How to Be Awesome at Life. By Zaila Avant-garde and Marti Dumas. Random, $17.99 (9780593568996). Gr. 3–7. May.

Koenigsegg Regera. By Kaitlyn Duling. Bellwether/Epic, lib. ed., $26.95 (9798886871760). Gr. 3–7. Jan.

Lethal Strikers: Latin America's Deadliest Snakes (series). Mitchell Lane/EZ Readers. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.86. Six-title set price, $197.16. Gr. 2–4. Spring.

Life on Earth! Biodiversity Explained (series). Bearport. Individual titles, lib. ed., $19.95. Six-title set price, $119.70. Gr. 3–7. Spring.

Life on Mars. By Joyce Markovics. Norwood, lib. ed., $26.60 (9781684507306). Gr. 4–6. Jan.

Life on the Thames. By Emma Shoard. Illus. by the author. Child's Play, $19.99 (9781786284723). Gr. 2–4. Apr.

The Magnificent Book of Treasures: Vikings. By Stella A. Caldwell. Illus. by Eugenia Nobati. Weldon Owen, $19.99 (9781681889023). Gr. 3–6. Aug.

Mexikid. By Pedro Martín. Art by the author. Dial, $24.99 (9780593462287). Gr. 5–8. Aug.

The Mind-Blowing World of Extraordinary Competitions: Meet the Incredible People Who Will Compete at Anything. By Anna Goldfield. Illus. by Hannah Riordan. Macmillan/Neon Squid, $17.99 (9781684492862). Gr. 3–5. Apr.

Mission—Arctic: A Scientific Adventure to a Changing North Pole. By Katharina Weiss-Tuider. Illus. by Christina Schneider. Greystone Kids, $22.95 (9781771649568). Gr. 4–8. May.

Modern Art for Kids: Hands-on Art and Craft Activities Inspired by the Masters. By Stephanie Ho Poon. Illus. by the author. Quarto/Quarry, paper, $19.99 (9780760382073). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

The Museum on the Moon: The Curious Objects on the Lunar Surface. By Irene Latham. Illus. by the author. Bushel & Peck/Moonshower, $19.99 (9781638192039). Gr. 3–7. May.

Nature's Best Hope (Young Readers' Edition): How You Can Save the World in Your Own Yard. By Douglas W. Tallamy. Illus. by Sarah L. Thomson. Timber, $19 (9781643261652). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

NHL Teams Set 2 (series). Press Box. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.35. Eight-title set price, $250.80. Gr. 3–7. Spring.

Nomads: Life on the Move. By Kinchoi Lam. Illus. by the author. Cicada, $22.99 (9781800660328). Gr. 3–6. May.

People Power: Peaceful Protests That Changed the World. By Rebecca June. Illus. by Ximo Abadía. Prestel Junior, $16.95 (9783791375403). Gr. 2–5. May.

Pods, Troops, and Other Animal Groups (series). Crabtree/Crown. Individual titles, $22.95. Six-title set price, $137.70. Gr. 3–6. Spring.

The Polar Regions. By Jennifer Overend Prior. Teacher Created Materials, paper, $11.99 (9781087695211). Gr. 4–8. Mar.

Remote Control Cars. By Elizabeth Neuenfeldt. Bellwether/Epic, lib. ed., $26.95 (9798886871791). Gr. 3–7. Jan.

Restoring Prairie, Woods, and Pond: How a Small Trail Can Make a Big Difference. By Laurie Lawlor. Holiday, $19.99 (9780823451654). Gr. 5–8. Apr.

Round and Round Goes Mother Nature: 48 Stories of Life Cycles around the World. By Gabby Dawnay. Illus. by Margaux Samson Abadie. Wide Eyed, $30 (9780711279780). Gr. 2–5. May.

Science Starters (series). Black Rabbit/Brown Bear. Individual titles, lib. ed., $34.25. Six-title set price, $205.50. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

Scientists Are Saving the World! By Saskia Gwinn. Art by Ana Albero. Abrams/Magic Cat, $14.99 (9781419765964). Gr. 2–4. May.

The Scoop on Superstitions (series). The Child's World/Stride. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. 12-title set price, $376.32. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

The Secret Life of Oceans. By Moira Butterfield. Illus. by Vivian Mineker. Quarto/Happy Yak, $19.99 (9780711278721). Gr. 2–5. May.

She's a Mensch! Ten Amazing Jewish Women. By Anne Dublin. Second Story, paper, $22.95 (9781772603200). Gr. 4–7. May.

Structural Wonders (series). Focus/Navigator. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.35. Six-title set price, $188.10. Gr. 3–5. Spring.

Superpod: Saving the Endangered Orcas of the Pacific Northwest. By Nora Nickum. Chicago Review, $19.99 (9781641607933). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Taiwan. By Golriz Golkar. Bellwether/Blastoff! Discovery, lib. ed., $27.95 (9798886871494). Gr. 3–8. Jan.

Tale vs. Truth (series). Amicus. Individual titles, lib. ed., $34.25. Six-title set price, $205.50. Gr. 1–4. Spring.

Total Garbage: A Messy Dive into Trash, Waste, and Our World. By Rebecca Donnelly. Illus. by John Hendrix. Godwin, $19.99 (9781250760388). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

A True Book: Survival Skills (series). Scholastic. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31. Four-title set price, $124. Gr. 3–5. Spring.

The Ultimate Guide to Minecraft Creative Mode (Independent & Unofficial). By Eddie Robson. Welbeck/Mortimer, paper, $14.95 (9781839352188). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

United States Encyclopedias (series). ABDO/Reference. Individual titles, lib. ed., $47.07. Four-title set price, $188.28. Gr. 5–8. Spring.

Unseen Jungle: The Microbes That Secretly Control Our World. By Eleanor Spicer Rice. Illus. by Rob Wilson. Candlewick/MIT Kids, $19.99 (9781536226461). Gr. 2–5. May.

Weird but True: Sharks. By National Geographic Kids. National Geographic, lib. ed., $18.90 (9781426372414). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Wellness Workshop (series). ABDO/Checkerboard. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.79. Six-title set price, $196.74. Gr. 3–6. Spring.

What About: Philosophy. By Anne-Sophie Chilard and Jean-Charles Pettier. Illus. by Pascal Lemaitre. Chronicle/Twirl, $16.99 (9791036353086). Gr. 5–8. May.

What Goes on inside a Beaver Pond? By Becky Cushing Gop. Illus. by Carrie Shryock. Storey, $18.99 (9781635865271). Gr. 3–5 Aug.

Why Does Plastic Hurt the Planet? How Our Stuff Is Harming the Earth, and What You Can Do to Reduce Your Use. By Clive Gifford. Illus. by Hannah Li. Earth Aware, $19.99 (9781647226114). Gr. 2–4. Aug.

Wild Animals (series). Apex. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.35. Eight-title set price, $250.80. Gr. 3–7. Spring.

Wild Child: Nature Adventures for Young Explorers—with Amazing Things to Make, Find, and Do. By Dara McAnulty. Illus. by Barry Falls. The Experiment, $22.95 (9781615199167). Gr. 2–6. Apr.

Fiction

The Adventures of Bubba Jones: Time-Traveling through Yellowstone National Park. By Jeff Alt. Illus. by Hannah Tuohy. Beaufort, paper, $9.99 (9780825309847). Gr. 3–7. May.

Ajay and the Mumbai Sun. By Varsha Shah. Scholastic/Chicken House, $18.99 (9781338875461). Gr. 3–7. July.

Archie & Friends: Endless Escapades. By Archie Superstars. Art by the author. Archie Comics, paper, $12.99 (9781645768852). Gr. 2–5. July.

Arthur the Always King. By Kevin Crossley-Holland. Illus. by Chris Riddell. Candlewick Studio, $29.99 (9781536212655). Gr. 5–8. Apr.

Astroneer, v.1: Countdown. By Dave Dwonch. Art by Xenia Pamfil. Titan, paper, $13.99 (9781787739901). Gr. 5–8. Mar.

Back to the Bright Before. By Katherin Nolte. Illus. by Jennifer Bricking. Random, $17.99 (9780593565100). Gr. 3–7. May.

Barely Floating. By Lilliam Rivera. Penguin/Kokila, $17.99 (9780593323120). Gr. 4–7. July.

Batu and the Search for the Golden Cup. By Lilya Kalaus and Zira Nauryzbai. Tr. by Shelley Fairweather-Vega. Amazon Crossing, $17.99 (9781662507021). Gr. 3–7. June.

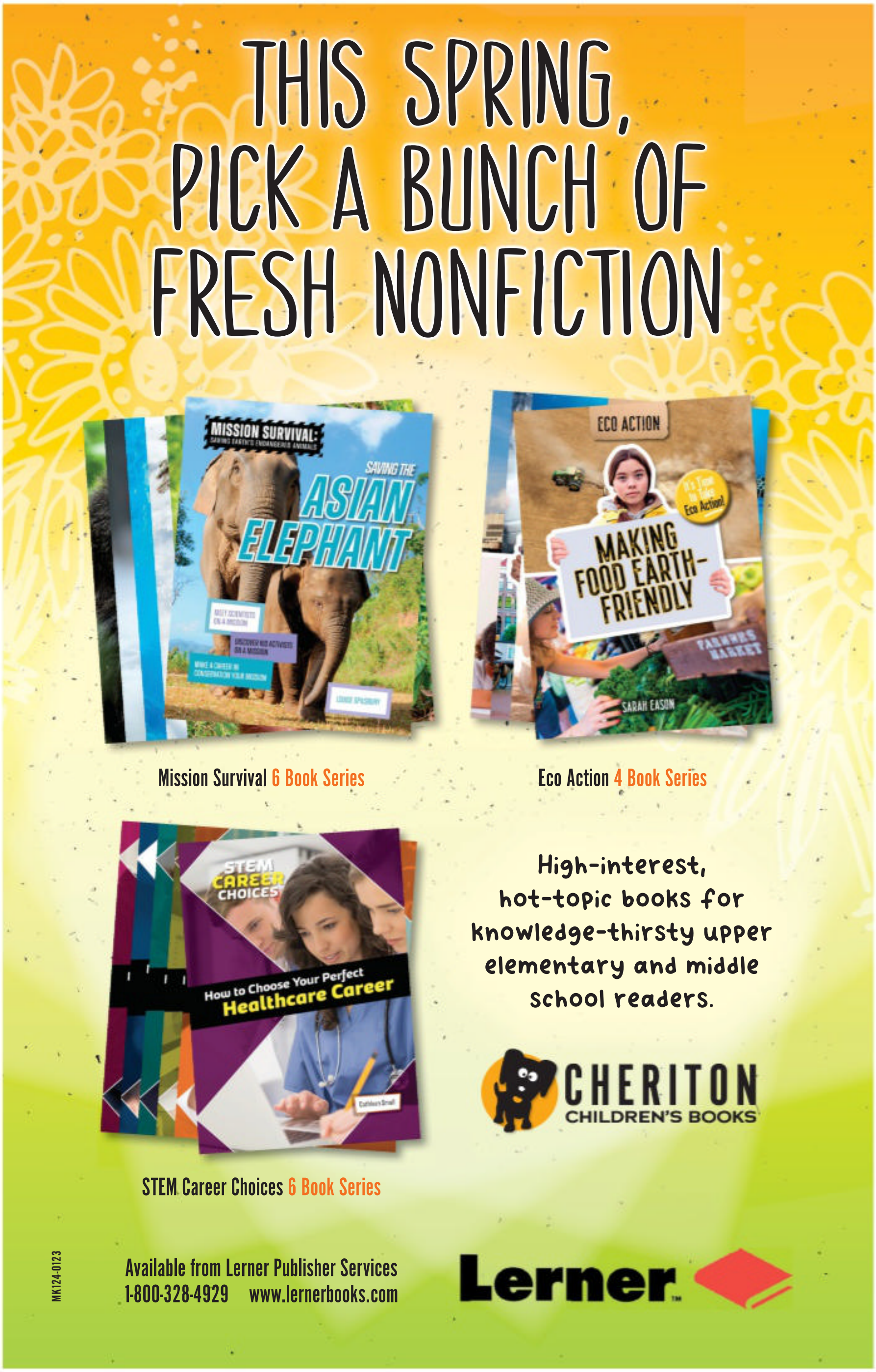
Ben and Becky on an African Safari / Ben y Becca de safari en África. By Sindy McKay. Illus. by Meredith Johnson. Treasure Bay, paper, $5.99 (9781601150554). Gr. 2–3. June.

Buzzing. By Samuel Sattin. Art by Rye Hickman. Little, Brown Ink, paper, $12.99 (9780316628419). Gr. 3–7. July.

Clara Poole and the Long Way Round. By Taylor Tyng. Pixel+Ink, $17.99 (9781645951599). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

El Club de Cómics de Supergatito: A propósito. By Dav Pilkey. Art by the author. Scholastic, $12.99 (9781338849226). Gr. 2–5. Mar.

Code Red. By Joy McCullough. Atheneum, $17.99 (9781534496262). Gr. 3–6. June.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STEM CAREER CHOICES
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Curses Are the Worst. By Elizabeth Eulberg. Scholastic, paper, $7.99 (9781338815351). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Danger in the Deep Sea. By Kate Jerome. Illus. by Francesca Risoldi. Weldon Owen, paper, $7.99 (9781681889085). Gr. 2–5. May.

The Deadlands: Hunted. By Skye Melki-Wegner. Holt, $16.99 (9781250827692). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Dear Elsa. By Marco Fraticelli. Red Deer, paper, $14.95 (9780889956865). Gr. 4–7. Mar.

The Demon Sword Asperides. By Sarah Jean Horowitz. Algonquin, $16.99 (9781643752785). Gr. 4–7. July.

Disagreement. By Nani Brunini. Illus. by the author. Tapioca Stories, $19.95 (9781734783971). Gr. 1–5. July.

Disney Pixar Turning Red: 4*Town 4*Real. By Dirchansky. Art by KAIfee. VIZ Media, paper, $14.99 (9781974734795). Gr. 4–8. Apr.

Eb & Flow. By Kelly J. Baptist. Crown, $16.99 (9780593429136). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Elf Dog and Owl Head. By M. T. Anderson. Illus. by Junyi Wu. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536222814). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Ellie Engle Saves Herself. By Leah Johnson. Disney/Hyperion, $18.99 (9781368085557). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

Epic Ellisons: Cosmos Camp. By Lamar Giles. Illus. by Morgan Bissant. HarperCollins/Versify, $18.99 (9780358423379). Gr. 3–7. May.

The Eyes and the Impossible. By Dave Eggers. Illus. by Shawn Harris. McSweeney's, $28 (9781952119453). Gr. 3–7. May.

The Fall of the House of Tatterly. By Shanna Miles. Union Square Kids, $16.99 (9781454949305). Gr. 3–7. Aug.

Flavor Girls. By Loïc Locatelli-Kournwsky. Art by the author. Boom!/Archaia, $24.99 (9781684158898). Gr. 4–8. May.

The Fox's Tower. By Sam Thompson. Illus. by Anna Tromop. Little Island, $16.99 (9781915071354). Gr. 3–7. Aug.

Garvey's Choice: The Graphic Novel. By Nikki Grimes. Art by Theodore Taylor III. Astra/Wordsong, $22.99 (9781662660023). Gr. 4–7. June.

Global. By Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin. Art by Giovanni Rigano. Sourcebooks/Young Readers, $24.99 (9781728257235). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Grounded. By Aisha Saeed, Huda Al-Marashi, Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow, and S. K. Ali. Abrams/Amulet, $18.99 (9781419761751). Gr. 3–7. May.

Gustav & Henri: Tiny Aunt Island. By Andy Matthews. Art by Peader Thomas. Red Comet, $14.99 (9781636550480). Gr. 2–5. Mar.

The Honey Jar. By Joan Schoettler. Bushel & Peck, $16.99 (9781638191544). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

The House on Sunrise Lagoon: Sam Makes a Splash. By Nicole Melleby. Algonquin, $16.99 (9781643753102). Gr. 3–7. May.

I Fell into a Fairy Tale (series). Capstone/Stone Arch. Individual titles, lib. ed., $22.65. Four-title set price, $106.60. Gr. 3–5. Fall.

In the Tunnel. By Julie Lee. Holiday, $18.99 (9780823450398). Gr. 3–7. May.

Indigo and Ida. By Heather Murphy Capps. Carolrhoda, $19.99 (9781728467689). Gr. 5–7. Apr.

It'll Be Irie: Staying True to Yourself. By Donn Swaby. Illus. by Alejandra Barajas. Cardinal Rule, $17.95 (9798985805178). Gr 2–5. July.

The Journal of Anxious Izzy Parker. By Alma Fullerton. Illus. by the author. Second Story, paper, $10.95 (9781772603163). Gr. 2–4. May.

Juniper Mae: Knight of Tykotech City. By Sarah Soh. Art by the author. Flying Eye, paper, $17.99 (9781912497454). Gr. 2–4. Mar.

Just Gus. By McCall Hoyle. Shadow Mountain, $18.99 (9781639930937). Gr. 4–6. Apr.

Kariba. By Daniel Clarke, James Clarke, and Daniel Snaddon. Art by Daniel Clarke and Daniel Snaddon. Catalyst, paper, $19.99 (9781946395825). Gr. 5–8. June.

Kittens Are Monsters! By Susan Tan. Illus. by Wendy Tan Shiau Wei. Scholastic/Branches, paper, $5.99 (9781338756395). Gr. 1–4. Apr.

The Labors of Hercules Beal. By Gary D. Schmidt. Clarion, $19.99 (9780358659631). Gr. 3–7. May.

Lei and the Fire Goddess. By Malia Maunakea. Penguin Workshop, $17.99 (9780593522035). Gr. 3–7. June.

Link and Hud: Heroes by a Hair. By Jarrett Pumphrey and Jerome Pumphrey. Art by the authors. Norton/Young Readers, $16.95 (9781324016090). Gr. 4–7. Mar.

Lo and Behold. By Wendy Mass. Illus. by Gabi Mendez. Random/RH Graphic, $20.99 (9780593179635). Gr. 5–8. May.

Lore Isle. By Jiin Kim. Nimbus, paper, $14.95 (9781774711927). Gr. 4–8. June.

Magic Strong (series). Crabtree/Leaves. Individual titles, lib. ed., $24.50. Five-title set price, $122.50. Gr. 2–5. Spring.

Majdi Mansoor and the Book of Miracles. By Anisa Bezak. Kube, paper, $13.95 (9780860378280). Gr. 6–8. Apr.

The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams. By Daniel Nayeri. Illus. by Daniel Miyares. Levine Querido/Arthur A. Levine, $21.99 (9781646143030). Gr. 5–8. Mar.

The Many Masks of Andy Zhou. By Jack Cheng. Dial, $17.99 (9780525553823). Gr. 5–8. June.

Melt. By Ele Fountain. Pushkin, paper, $13.95 (9781782692881). Gr. 4–7. June.

Mèo and Bé. By DoanPhuong Nguyen. Lee & Low/Tu, $21.95 (9781643796253). Gr. 5–8. May.

Métete al juego Set 2 (series). ABDO/Graphic Planet. Individual titles, lib. ed., $34.22. Six-title set price, $205.32. Gr. 4–8. Spring.

Moth in a Fancy Cardigan. By Charlotte Lance. Illus. by David Booth. Berbay, $19.99 (9781922610577). Gr. 3–6. June.

Mulysses. By Øyvind Torseter. Art by the author. Tr. by Kari Dickson. Enchanted Lion, $29.95 (9781592702763). Gr. 4–8. Apr.

My Little Pony, v.1: Big Horseshoes to Fill. By Celeste Bronfman, Robin Easter, and Mary Kenney. Art by Amy Mebberson and Trish Forstner. IDW, paper, $9.99 (9781684059522). Gr. 4–7. Apr.

Occulted. By Ryan Estrada and Amy Rose. Art by Jeongmin Lee. Iron Circus, paper, $15 (9781638991090). Gr. 4–7. May.

Otis & Peanut. By Naseem Hrab. Art by Kelly Collier. Owlkids, $18.95 (9781771474962). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

Out of the Fires: A Journal of Resilience and Recovery after Disaster. By Carrie Lara. Illus. by Colleen Lamour. Magination, $19.99 (9781433840692). Gr. 3–7. July.

Parachute Kids. By Betty C. Tang. Art by the author. Scholastic/Graphix, paper, $12.99 (9781338832686). Gr. 4–7. Apr.

Punk Rock Unicorn: Another Phoebe and Her Unicorn Adventure. By Dana Simpson. Art by the author. Andrews McMeel, paper, $12.99 (9781524879228). Gr. 3–6. Apr.

The Remarkable Rescue at Milkweed Meadow. By Elaine Dimopoulos. Illus. by Doug Salati. Charlesbridge, $17.99 (9781623543334). Gr. 3–6. May.

School Trip. By Jerry Craft. Art by the author. HarperCollins/Quill Tree, $24.99 (9780062885548). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Serwa Boateng's Guide to Witchcraft and Mayhem. By Roseanne A. Brown. Disney/Rick Riordan Presents, $17.99 (9781368066464). Gr. 5–8. Aug.

Shelley Frankenstein! CowPiggy. By Colleen Madden. Art by the author. Top Shelf, paper, $14.99 (9781603095228). Gr. 4–7. May.

Shibanban: Super Cute Doggies. By Yasuteru Ogoshi. Art by the author. Seven Seas, paper, $14.99 (9781685794804). Gr. 4–8. May.

The Snowcat Prince. By Dina Norlund. Art by the author. Oni, paper, $14.99 (9781637151983). Gr. 3–6. Mar.

A Spoonful of Time. By Flora Ahn. Illus. by the author. Quirk, $16.99 (9781683693185). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Star Wars: The High Republic; Quest for Planet X. By Tessa Gratton. Disney/Lucasfilm, $14.99 (9781368082877). Gr. 3–7. Mar.

The Storyteller. By Brandon Hobson. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338797268). Gr. 4–7. May.

The Sun and the Star. By Rick Riordan and Mark Oshiro. Disney/Hyperion, $19.99 (9781368081153). Gr. 5–8. Mar.

Tiger Daughter. By Rebecca Lim. Delacorte, $17.99 (9780593648971). Gr. 5–8. Aug.

Two Green Birds. By Geraldo Valério. Illus. by the author. Groundwood, $14.99 (9781773067957). Gr. 1–4. May.

The Umbrella House. By Colleen Nelson. Pajama, $18.95 (9781772782790). Gr. 3–7. June.

The Unlovable Alina Butt. By Ambreen Butt-Hussain. Orca, paper, $12.95 (9781459834910). Gr. 4–7. May.

The Unpetables. By Dennis Messner. Art by the author. Top Shelf, paper, $9.99 (9781603095235). Gr. 4–7. June.

Up for Grabs. By Michelle Mulder. Cormorant/DCB, paper, $14.95 (9781770866942). Gr. 4–7. May.

A Vanishing of Griffins. By S. A. Patrick. Peachtree, $17.99 (9781682633885). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

Vincent Ventura and the Case of the Dancing Devil / Vincent Ventura y el caso del diablo bailarín. By Xavier Garza. Arte Público/Piñata, paper, $11.95 (9781558859654). Gr. 4–8. May.

W.I.T.C.H. The Graphic Novel, Part X: Ladies vs. W.I.T.C.H., v.1. By Disney. Art by the author. Yen/JY, paper, $15 (9781975344696). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

We Still Belong. By Christine Day. HarperCollins/Heartdrum, $18.99 (9780063064560). Gr. 3–7. Aug.

We the Future. By Cliff Lewis. Jolly Fish, lib. ed., $19.99 (9781631636967). Gr. 3–7. Apr.

When Clouds Touch Us. By Thanhhà Lai. Harper, $18.99 (9780063047006). Gr. 3–7. May.

The Wildes: The Amazon. By Roland Smith. Sleeping Bear, $17.95 (9781534111943). Gr. 4–7. Apr.

Willowmere. By Andrea Cox Christen. Chicken Scratch, paper, $11.99 (9781953743244). Gr. 5–8. Aug.

The Witch of Woodland. By Laurel Snyder. HarperCollins/Walden Pond, $19.99 (9780062836656). Gr. 3–7. May.

The Woodlot Monster Mysteries (series). ABDO/Spellbound. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.79. Six-title set price, $196.74. Gr. 3–7. Spring.

A Work in Progress. By Jarrett Lerner. Aladdin, $17.99 (9781665905152). Gr. 3–7. May.

World's Worst Time Machine. By Dustin Brady. Illus. by Dave Bardin. Andrews McMeel, $13.99 (9781524884130). Gr. 2–5. Apr.

Worst Broommate Ever! By Wanda Coven. Illus. by Anna Abramskaya. Simon & Schuster/Simon Spotlight, paper, $14.99 (9781665925280). Gr. 3–7. May.

YAHGZ: The Craynobi Tales. By Art Balthazar. Art by the author. Papercutz, paper, $9.99 (9781545810583). Gr. 5–7. Aug.

Zara's Rules for Living Your Best Life. By Hena Khan. Illus. by Wastana Haikal. Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads, $17.99 (9781534497658). Gr. 3–5. Mar.

Younger Readers

Nonfiction

All about Nothing. By Elizabeth Rusch. Illus. by Elizabeth Goss. Charlesbridge, $17.99 (9781623543525). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

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Animal Societies (series). Capstone/Pebble. Individual titles, lib. ed., $29.32. Four-title set price, $117.28. K–Gr. 3. Fall.

Around the World on 80 Horses. By Jill Newton. Illus. by the author. Child's Play, $19.99 (9781786288080). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

The Art of Rewilding: The Return of Yellowstone's Wolves. By Nadja Belhadj. Illus. by Marc Majewski. Milky Way, $19.99 (9781990252198). Gr. 1–3. Apr.

Artistic Sports (series). ABDO/Kids Jumbo. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.79. Six-title set price, $196.74. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

Autumn Peltier, Water Warrior. By Carole Lindstrom. Illus. by Bridget George. Roaring Brook, $18.99 (9781250795274). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

Axolotls. By Rachel Grack. Bellwether/Blastoff!, lib. ed., $26.95 (9798886871180). K–Gr. 3. Jan.

Baby Hedgehogs. By Elizabeth Neuenfeldt. Bellwether/Blastoff! Beginners, lib. ed., $25.95 (9798886871081). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Baby North American Animals (series). Lerner. Individual titles, lib. ed., $29.32. Eight-title set price, $234.56. Gr. 1–3. Aug.

Behold the Octopus! By Suzanne Slade. Illus. by Thomas Gonzalez. Peachtree, $18.99 (9781682633120). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

The Big Book of Nature Art. By Yuval Zommer. Illus. by the author. Thames & Hudson, $19.95 (9780500652930). K–Gr. 2. June.

Body Music: Poems about the Noises Your Body Makes. By Jane Yolen and Ryan G. Van Cleave. Illus. by Luis San Vicente. Bushel & Peck/Moonshower, $18.99 (9781638192015). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

Bugs: Exploring the World of Crawly Critters. By Shirley Raines. Illus. by Curt Hart. Flowerpot, $12.99 (9781486727025). K–Gr. 2. Apr.

Caterpillars: What Will I Be When I Get to Be Me? By Kevin McCloskey. Art by the author. TOON, $12.99 (9781662665080). PreS–Gr. 2. July.

Cats (series). ABDO/Cody Koala. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. Six-title set price, $188.16. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

Chef Edna: Queen of Southern Cooking, Edna Davis. By Melvina Noel. Illus. by Cozbi A. Cabrera. Cameron Kids, $18.99 (9781951836399). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

A Colony of Rabbits. By Danielle Denega. Scholastic, $25 (9781338853377). K–Gr. 2. Mar.

Las cosas que me gustan (Things I Like) (series). Little Blue Readers. Individual titles, lib. ed., $25.64. Eight-title set price, $205.12. PreS–Gr. 1. Spring.

Creative Crafting (series). ABDO/Super Sandcastle. Individual titles, lib. ed., $32.79. Six-title set price, $196.74. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

The Cutest Animal Babies. By Welbeck Publishing. Welbeck/Mortimer, $14.95 (9781839352256). PreS. Aug.

D Is for Donut. By Rachel Teichman. Illus. by Rebecca Wright. Collective Book, $15.95 (9781685551865). PreS–Gr. 1. June.

Dino Discovery (series). The Child's World/Wonder. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. 12-title set price, $376.32. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

Door by Door: How Sarah McBride Became America's First Openly Transgender Senator. By Meeg Pincus. Illus. by Meridth McKean Gimbel. Crown, $18.99 (9780593484654). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Eid al-Fitr. By Rebecca Sabelko. Bellwether/Blastoff! Beginners, lib. ed., $25.95 (9798886871005). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Eureka! The Biography of an Idea: Wind Power. By Laura Driscoll. Illus. by Marco Guadalupi. Astra/Kane, $17.99 (9781662670046). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Everyday Sign Language Set 2 (series). ABDO/Kids Junior. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. Six-title set price, $188.16. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

Finding Family: The Duckling Raised by Loons. By Laura Purdie Salas. Illus. by Alexandria Neonakis. Lerner/Millbrook, lib. ed., $20.99 (9781728442990). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

The Forest Keeper: The True Story of Jadav Payeng. By Rina Singh. Illus. by Ishita Jain. NorthSouth, $18.95 (9780735845053). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Garden Walk. By Virginia Brimhall Snow. Illus. by the author. Gibbs Smith, $16.99 (9781423662525). PreS–Gr. 3. Feb.

Garden Wonders: A Guidebook for Little Green Thumbs. By Sarah Grindler. Illus. by the author. Nimbus, $19.95 (9781774711439). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

Germs. By John Devolle. Illus. by the author. Pushkin, $16.95 (9781782694021). K–Gr. 2. June.

Giraffe Math. By Stephen Swinburne. Illus. by Geraldo Valério. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $18.99 (9780316346771). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

The Girl Who Heard the Music: How One Pianist and 85,000 Bottles and Cans Brought New Hope to an Island. By Mahani Teave and Marni Fogelson. Illus. by Marta Álvarez Miguéns. Sourcebooks/eXplore, $18.99 (9781728262314). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Granny Came Here on the Empire Windrush. By Patrice Lawrence. Illus. by Camilla Sucre. Nosy Crow, $17.99 (9798887770338). K–Gr. 3. May.

Home Is Calling: The Journey of the Monarch Butterfly. By Katherine Pryor. Illus. by Ellie Peterson. WorthyKids, $17.99 (9781546003137). PreS–Gr. 2. Aug.

Hope for Ryan White. By Dano Moreno. Illus. by Hannah Abbo. Albert Whitman, $18.99 (9780807533543). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

I Feel the World. By Zanni Louise. Illus. by Nina Gould. Five Mile, $17.99 (9781922677297). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

I Know Directions (series). Gareth Stevens. Individual titles, lib. ed., $24.27. Six-title set price, $145.62. PreS–Gr. 1. Spring.

I See Animal Textures! (series). Jump!/Tadpole. Individual titles, lib. ed., $17.95. Four-title set price, $71.80. PreS–K. Spring.

It's Just Skin, Silly! By Nina Jablonski and Holly McGee. Illus. by Karen Vermeulen. Catalyst, $18.99 (9781733547413). PreS–Gr. 2. July.

Juneteenth. By Van G. Garrett. Illus. by Reginald C. Adams and Samson Bimbo Adenugba. HarperCollins/Versify, $19.99 (9780358574323). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Keepsake Crafts for Grandpa and Me. By Megan Hewes Butler. Illus. by Francesca De Luca. Macmillan/Odd Dot, paper, $17.99 (9781250804143). PreS–Gr. 1. May.

Kid Character (series). Phoenix International/Sequoia Kids. Individual titles, lib. ed., $25.98. Six-title set price, $155.88. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

A Kid's Guide to Backyard Birds. By Eliza Berkowitz. Illus. by Nicole LaRue. Gibbs Smith, paper, $12.99 (9781423662631). Gr. 1–3. Mar.

A Kids Book about Anxiety. By DK. DK/DK Children, $19.99 (9780744085693). K–Gr. 3. July.

Last Flight. By Kristen Mai Giang. Illus. by Dow Phumiruk. Levine Querido/Arthur A. Levine, $18.99 (9781646140862). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Let's Get Outdoors! (series). Bellwether. Individual titles, lib. ed., $26.95. Six-title set price, $161.70. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

Light Speaks. Christine Layton. Illus. by Luciana Navarro Powell. Tilbury, $18.95 (9780884489245). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Little Dose of Nature. By Allison Greenwood. Illus. by Anneli Bray. Quarto/Ivy Kids, $21.99 (9780711279636). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

The Little Lab: Fantastic Science for Kids. Ed. by Good Housekeeping. Hearst Home, $23 (9781950785926). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

Little People, BIG DREAMS en Español (series). Quarto/Frances Lincoln. Individual titles, paper, $8.99. 20-title set price, $179.80. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

Louise Bourgeois Made Giant Spiders and Wasn't Sorry. By Fausto Gilberti. Illus. by the author. Phaidon, $17.95 (9781838666248). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Measuring Things (series). Crabtree/Roots. Individual titles, $20.95. Six-title set price, $125.70. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

Michelle Obama: The Fantastically Feminist (and Totally True) Story of the Inspirational Activist and Campaigner. By Anna Doherty. Illus. by the author. Wren & Rook, paper, $12.99 (9781526361103). K–Gr. 2. Apr.

Molly: A Love Story. By Dana Brackob. Illus. by Evgeniya Kozhevnikova. Histria, paper, $14.99 (9781592112500). K–Gr. 2. May.

Mommy Bear, Baby and Me! Living with a New Baby. By Moira Butterfield. Illus. by Gwen Millward. Welbeck, $14.95 (9781803381275). PreS–K. July.

Musical Instruments (series). Little Blue Readers. Individual titles, lib. ed., $28.50. Eight-title set price, $159.60. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

My First Book of House Pets. By duopress labs. Illus. by Åsa Gilland. Sourcebooks/duopress, $8.99 (9781955834469). PreS. June.

My Teeth (series). Capstone/Pebble. Individual titles, lib. ed., $27.99. Four-title set price, $111.96. K–Gr. 3. Fall.

Nobody Likes Frogs: A Book of Toadally Fun Facts. By Barbara Davis-Pyles. Illus. by Liz Wong. Sasquatch/Little Bigfoot, $17.99 (9781632173355). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Once upon a Fairy Tale House: The True Story of Four Sisters and the Magic They Built. By Mary Lyn Ray. Illus. by Giselle Potter. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane, $18.99 (9781481479820). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Oops! Accidental Inventions (series). Bearport/Bearcub. Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Six-title set price, $113.70. K–Gr. 1. Spring.

Peace with Buddha. By Chitwan Mittal and Debasmita Dasgupta. Illus. by Sarita Saraf. AdiDev, $9.99 (9788195388677). PreS. Jan.

Places / Lugares. By Mikala Carpenter. Illus. by Gemma Román. Starry Forest/Little Hero, $9.99 (9781946000507). PreS. June.

The Queen of Chess: How Judit Polgár Changed the Game. By Laurie Wallmark. Illus. by Stevie Lewis. little bee, $18.99 (9781499813067). K–Gr. 3. July.

Rain Forest Life (series). ABDO/Dash! Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. Six-title set price, $188.16. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

Science Questions (series). Jump!/Bullfrog. Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Four-title set price, $75.80. K–Gr. 3. Spring.

The Secret Life of Bugs and Other Little Critters. By Emmanuelle Figueras. Illus. by Alexander Vidal. Chronicle/Twirl, $18.99 (9782408042547). PreS–Gr. 2. Mar.

Shapes, Shapes Everywhere. By Lenka Chytilova. Illus. by Gary Boller. Albatros, $16.95 (9788000068428). K–Gr. 3. Aug.

Spot Horses (series). Amicus. Individual titles, lib. ed., $29.95. Six-title set price, $179.70. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

STEM Superstars (series). Norwood. Individual titles, lib. ed., $25.27. Four-title set price, $101.08. K–Gr. 2. Spring.

Tenacious: Fifteen Adventures alongside Disabled Athletes. By Patty Cisneros Prevo. Illus. by Dion MBD. Lee & Low, $20.95 (9781643790985). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

That's Not a Dino! (series). Bearport/Fusion. Individual titles, lib. ed., $18.95. Four-title set price, $75.80. Gr. 1–3. Spring.

A Tulip in Winter: A Story about Folk Artist Maud Lewis. By Kathy Stinson. Illus. by Lauren Soloy. Greystone Kids, $18.95 (9781771649513). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Walking Together. By Albert D. Marshall and Louise Zimanyi. Illus. by Emily Kewageshig. Annick, $18.99 (9781773217765). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Watch Me Bloom: 24 Flower Haiku for Happy Little Minds. By Krina Patel-Sage. Illus. by the author. Lantana, $18.99 (9781913747992). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

We Garden Together! Projects for Kids: Learn, Grow, and Connect with Nature. By Jane Hirschi and the Educators at CitySprouts. Illus. by Kim Lowe. Storey, $12.99 (9781635865455). PreS–Gr. 2. Mar.

What Lurks in the Dark. By Kelly Ward-Wills. Illus. by Steven James. Eye of Newt, $10.95 (9781777791827). PreS. June.

When Moon Became the Moon. By Rob Hodgson. Illus. by the author. Penguin Workshop/RISE, $18.99 (9780593523629). PreS–K. Aug.

Where Materials Come From (series). Crabtree/Seedlings. Individual titles, $20.95. Four-title set price, $83.80. K–Gr. 2. Spring.

Where the Weird Things Are: An Ocean Twilight Zone Adventure. By Zoleka Filander. Illus. By Patricia Hooning. Earth Aware, $18.99 (9781647225889). PreS–Gr. 2. Mar.

Whose Dinosaur Bones Are Those? By Chihiro Takeuchi. Illus. by the author. Candlewick Studio, $17.99 (9781536230697). PreS–K. June.

Words of Wonder from Z to A. By Zaila Avant-garde. Illus. by Keisha Morris. Doubleday, $18.99 (9780593568934). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

Fiction

¡Viva la naturaleza! By PI Kids. Illus. by Jerrod Maruyama. Phoenix International/PI Kids, lib.ed., $25.98 (9798765400043). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

9 Kilometers. By Claudio Aguilera. Illus. by Gabriela Lyon. Tr. by Lawrence Schimel. Eerdmans, $18.99 (9780802856005). K–Gr. 3. Feb.

10 Cats. By Emily Gravett. Illus. by the author. Boxer, $16.99 (9781914912580). PreS–K. May.

ABC and You and Me. By Corinna Luyken. Illus. by the author. Penguin/Rocky Pond, $18.99 (9780593530467). PreS–K. June.

ABC-Deconstructing Gender. By Ashley Molesso and Chess Needham. Illus. by the authors. Running Press Kids, $18.99 (9780762481408). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Afterward, Everything Was Different: A Tale of the Pleistocene. By Jairo Buitrago. Illus. by Rafael Yockteng. Greystone Kids/Aldana Libros, $19.95 (9781778400605). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Aldo Renaldo and the Renegade Alphabet. By George Johnson. Illus. by Dawn Burn. Histria, $19.99 (9781592112968). PreS–Gr. 2. Aug.

Alicia quiere crecer. By PI Kids. Illus. by Jerrod Maruyama. Phoenix International/PI Kids, lib.ed., $25.98 (9798765400005). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

All in a Day. By Chihiro Takeuchi. Illus. by the author. Berbay, $18.99 (9781922610546). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Anchored. By Debra Tidball. Illus. by Arielle Li. Exisle/EK, $19.99 (9781922539496). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Ancient Night. By David Álvarez and David Bowles. Illus. by David Álvarez. Levine Querido, $18.99 (9781646142514). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Arithmechicks Find Their Place: A Math Story. By Ann Marie Stephens. Illus. by Jia Liu. Astra/Astra Young Readers, $12.99 (9781635925999). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Art and Joy: Best Friends Forever. By Danielle Krysa. Illus. by the author. Prestel Junior, $16.95 (9783791375373). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

Arthi's Bomma. By Mamta Nainy. Illus. by Shruti Prabhu. Yali, $19.99 (9781949528749). Gr. 1–2. June.

Ary's Trees. By Deborah Kerbel. Illus. by Sophia Choi. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $21.95 (9781554554096). Gr. 1–3. June.

The Babka Sisters. By Lesléa Newman. Illus. by Tika Bobokhidze and Tata Bobokhidze. Lerner/Kar-Ben, $19.99 (9781728445564). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

The Bee with No Wings. By Amberlea Williams. Illus. by the author. Princeton Architectural, $18.99 (9781797222509). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Best Big Sister Ever! By Katherine Holabird. Illus. by Helen Craig. Simon & Schuster/Simon Spotlight, paper, $5.99 (9781665935937). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Big Kids Don't Get Butterflies. By Ceece Kelley. Illus. by Sawyer Cloud. Soaring Kite, $18.99 (9781953859518). K–Gr. 3. May.

Biindigen! Amik Says Welcome. By Nancy Cooper. Illus. by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley. Owlkids, $18.95 (9781771475150). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Bing! Bang! Chugga! Beep! By Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson. Illus. by Nathalie Beauvois. Brown, $18.99 (9781612545998). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Birdie Lights up the World. By Alison McLennan. Illus. by Lauren Mullinder. Exisle/EK, $19.99 (9781922539489). K–Gr. 3. June.

Bitsy Bat, School Star. By Kaz Windness. Illus. by the author. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, $18.99 (9781665905053) PreS–Gr. 3. June.

Black Girl, Black Girl. By Angela Bowden. Illus. by Letitia Fraser. Nimbus, $18.95 (9781774711415). K–Gr. 3. June.

Black Swans. By Laurel van der Linde. Illus. by Sawyer Cloud. Phoenix International/Sunbird, lib.ed., $27.29 (9798765400203). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Bork. By Rhys Kitson. Illus. by the author. Phoenix International/Sunbird, lib. ed., $27.29 (9798765400197). PreS–Gr. 1. Jan.

The Boy Who Wore Bangles. By Riddhi Maniar Doda. Illus. by Shruti Hemani. Karadi Tales, paper, $11.95 (9789391790325). K–Gr. 3. May.

The Brand-New, Never-Used, Perfect Crayons. By Leanne Hatch. Illus. by the author. Holiday/Margaret Ferguson, $18.99 (9780823452309). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

The Brave Little Fire Dragon. By Bing Bo. Illus. by Wu Bo. Phoenix International/Cardinal, lib.ed., $27.29 (9798765400258). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Breaking to the Beat! By Linda J. Acevedo. Illus. by Frank Morrison. Lee & Low, $19.95 (9781643796390). Gr. 1–3. May.

BrindleFox. By John Sandford. Illus. by the author. WorthyKids, $18.99 (9781546003724). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

A Bucket of Questions. By Tim Fite. Illus. by the author. Atheneum, $18.99 (9781665918312). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Burt the Beetle Lives Here! By Ashley Spires. Art by the author. Kids Can, $14.99 (9781525310119). K–Gr. 3. June.

Can We Please Give the Police Department to the Grandmothers? By Junauda Petrus. Illus. By Kristen Uroda. Dutton, $18.99 (9780593462331). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

The Carpet: An Afghan Family Story. By Dezh Azaad. Illus. by Nan Cao. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419763618). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Chasing the Sun. By Liu Hao. Illus. by the author. Clavis, $17.95 (9781605378428). K–Gr. 2. July.

Cheese Fest! Composing Shapes. By Lori Haskins Houran. Illus. by Deborah Melmon. Astra/Kane, $16.99 (9781662670060). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Cinderella and a Mouse Called Fred. By Deborah Hopkinson. Illus. by Paul O. Zelinsky. Random/Anne Schwartz, $18.99 (9780593480038). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

City Beet. By Tziporah Cohen. Illus. by Udayana Lugo. Sleeping Bear, $18.99 (9781534112711). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Dad and Daddy's Big Big Family. By Seamus Kirst. Illus. by Karen Bunting. Magination, $18.99 (9781433840388). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Daddy Dressed Me. By Michael Gardner and Ava Gardner. Illus. by Nadia Fisher. Aladdin, $18.99 (9781665921954). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Dagfrid, Viking Girl: No More Ear Buns! By Agnès Mathieu-Daudé. Illus. by Olivier Tallec. Tr. by Nanette McGuinness. Arctis, paper, $7 (9781646908042). Gr. 1–3. Apr.

The Day Fin Flooded the World. By Adam Stower. Illus. by the author. Andersen, $18.99 (9781728492131). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Día de Muertos: Números; A Day of the Dead Counting Book. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Illus. by the author. Abrams/Appleseed, $15.99 (9781419764462). PreS–Gr. 1. May.

Dolly Parton's Billy the Kid Makes It Big. By Dolly Parton. Illus. by MacKenzie Haley. Penguin Workshop, $19.99 (9780593661574). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Don't Touch That Flower! By Alice Hemming. Illus. by Nicola Slater. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky, $17.99 (9781728271361). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Elena Rides. By Juana Medina. Illus. by the author. Candlewick, $9.99 (9781536216356). PreS–Gr. 1. Mar.

The Elephant Whisperer. By Linda Ragsdale. Illus. by Cat LeMaster. Flowerpot, $16.99 (9781486726998). PreS–Gr. 2. Mar.

Elmo's Potty Book: First Look and Find. By PI Kids. Illus. by Tom Brannon. Phoenix International/PI Kids, lib.ed., $25.98 (9798765400159). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Enough Is. By Jessica Whipple. Illus. by Nicole Wong. Tilbury, $18.95 (9780884489320). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

Everything Possible. By Karl Newson. Illus. by Rosalind Beardshaw. Nosy Crow, $15.99 (9798887770215). PreS–K. May.

Everywhere, Still. By M. H. Clark. Illus. by Claire Sahara Lemp. Compendium, $17.95 (9781957891033). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

The Fantastic Bureau of Imagination. By Brad Montague. Illus. by Brad Montague and Kristi Montague. Dial, $18.99 (9780593323472). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Farm Boots. By Lisl H. Detlefsen. Illus. by Renée Kurilla. Feeding Minds, $17.99 (9781948898119). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

A Field Guide to Leaflings: Guardians of the Trees. By Niamh Sharkey. Illus. by Owen Churcher. Bonnier/Templar, $17.99 (9781783425228). K–Gr. 2. Apr.

Fin and Feathers Deliver a Piano. By Callie C. Miller. Illus. by Jeffrey Ebbeler. Treasure Bay, paper, $5.99 (9781601153722). Gr. 1–2. June.

A Fin-tastic Surprise. By Valerie Tripp. Illus. by Thu Thai. American Girl, paper, $5.99 (9781683372103). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

First Look and Find (series). Phoenix International/PI Kids. Individual titles, lib. ed., $25.98. Three-title set price, $77.94. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

The Flock. By Margarita del Mazo. Illus. by Guridi. NubeOcho, $17.99 (9788419253262). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Flower Girl. By Amy Bloom. Illus. by Jameela Wahlgren. Norton/Young Readers, $18.95 (9781324030355). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Food Fight. By Alex Latimer. Illus. by the author. Kane Miller, $14.99 (9781684644957). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

La forma de un hogar. By Rashin Kheiriyeh. Illus. by the author. Tr. by Catalina Marín and Melissa Sarmiento. Levine Querido/Ediciones LQ, $16.99 (9781646142477). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Grandad's Pride. By Harry Woodgate. Illus. by the author. little bee, $18.99 (9781499814613). PreS–Gr. 1. Apr.

Grandpa's Scroll. By Frances Park and Ginger Park. Illus. by Kim Dong Hoon. Albert Whitman, $18.99 (9780807530207). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Green Papayas. By Nhung Tran Davies. Illus. by Gillian Newland. Red Deer, $21.95 (9780889955608). Gr. 1–3. Apr.

Happy Birthday, Belly Button! By Kalli Dakos. Illus. by Luciana Navarro Powell. Amicus, $16.99 (9781681527512). PreS–K. Mar.

Hedge Lion. By Robyn Wilson-Owen. Illus. by the author. Andersen, $18.99 (9781728492124). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Henry the Snail. By Katarina Macurova. Illus. by the author. Albatros, $16.95 (9788000067933). PreS–K. June.

Hey! Wake Up! By Sandra Boynton. Illus. by the author. Simon & Schuster/Boynton, $7.99 (9781665925099). PreS. June.

Hide and Shh! A Not-so-Sneaky Sister Story about Inclusion. By Christina Dendy. Illus. by Nathalia Takeyama. Cardinal Rule, $17.95 (9798985805130). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Hot-Cross Bunny. By Carys Bexington. Illus. by Mark A. Chambers. Quarto/Happy Yak, $18.99 (9780711283022). PreS–K. Mar.

How Far You'll Go. By Tim McCanna. Illus. by Grace Lee. Disney, $17.99 (9781368077750). K–Gr. 3. Mar.

How the Crayons Saved the Earth. By Monica Sweeney. Illus. by Wendy Leach. Skyhorse/Sky Pony, $19.99 (9781510772939). PreS–Gr. 1. Mar.

How to Get Your Octopus to School. By Becky Scharnhorst. Illus. by Jaclyn Sinquett. Flamingo, $18.99 (9780593205228). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

I Am BIG! By Itah Sadu. Illus. by Marley Berot. Second Story, $21.95 (9781772603125). K–Gr. 3. May.

I Hope You Will Know. By Jaren Ahlmann. Illus. by Pete Olczyk. Collective Book, $17.95 (9781951412982). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

I Think I Think a Lot. By Jessica Whipple. Illus. by Josée Bisaillon. Free Spirit, $17.99 (9798885540087). K–Gr. 3. Aug.

I Want to Be a River. By Cécile Elma Roger. Illus. by Ève Gentilhomme. Tra, $17.99 (9781735311593). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

I Want to Be Big! By Tiffany Golden. Illus. by Sawyer Cloud. Page Street, $18.99 (9781645676300). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

I Want to Build a Seahouse. By Whitney Moran. Illus. by Josée Bisaillon. Nimbus, $14.95 (9781774711491). K–Gr. 3. May.

I'm Sticking with You—and the Chicken Too! By Smriti Prasadam-Halls. Illus. by Steve Small. Holt/Godwin, $18.99 (9781250849656). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

If I Met an Ice Age Animal (series). Jump!/Grasshopper. Individual titles, lib. ed., $19.95. Four-title set price, $79.80. Gr. 1–2. Spring.

If You Get Lost. By Nikki Loftin. Illus. by Deborah Marcero. Random/Anne Schwartz, $18.99 (9780593375310). PreS–Gr. 2. July.

In the Night Garden. By Carin Berger. Illus. by the author. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823449866). PreS–K. June.

Jayden's Secret Ingredient. By Mélina Mangal. Illus. by Ken Daley. Free Spirit, $18.99 (9781631986024). PreS–Gr. 3. July.

Jitterbug. By Kai Lüftner. Illus. by Wiebke Rauers. NorthSouth, $19.95 (9780735844995). K–Gr. 2. Apr.

The Journey of the Little Prince. By Corinne Delporte. Illus. by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Tr. by Carine Laforest. CrackBoom!, $17.95 (9782898024979). PreS. Apr.

Kantiga Finds the Perfect Name. By Mabel Mnensa. Illus. by Burgen Thorne and Chantelle Thorne. Interlink/Crocodile, $18.95 (9781623717438). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Kitty-Cam. By Margie Palatini. Illus. by Dan Yaccarino. Simon & Schuster/Simon Spotlight, $17.99 (9781665927321). PreS–K. June.

The Last Two Crayons. By Leah Freeman-Haskin. Illus. by Shantala Robinson. Groundwood, $18.99 (9781773066233). K–Gr. 1. Apr.

Leela's Sweet Treats (series). ABDO/Calico Kid. Individual titles, lib. ed., $31.36. Six-title set price, $188.16. PreS–Gr. 3. Spring.

Liam Kingbird's Kingdom (series). Capstone/Picture Window. Individual titles, lib. ed., $22.65. Four-title set price, $85.28. K–Gr. 2. Fall.

Like Lava in My Veins. By Derrick Barnes. Illus. by Shawn Martinbrough. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $18.99 (9780525518747). K–Gr. 3. July.

The Lion's Whisker: Sister and Brother Take on a Challenge Together. By Rebecca Sheir. Illus. by Nikita Abuya. Storey, $14.99 (9781635865202). K–Gr. 2. May.

Little Black Hole. By Molly Webster. Illus. by Alex Willmore. Philomel, $18.99 (9780593464755). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Little Otter. By Julie Abery. Illus. by Suzie Mason. Amicus, $9.99 (9781681528700). PreS. Mar.

Little Umar's Search. By Mariam Kapadia. Illus. by Ali Lodge. Kube, $10.95 (9780860378433). PreS. July.

Look, It's Roar Roar Lion. By Camilla Reid. Illus. By Clare Youngs. Nosy Crow, $10.99 (9798887770024). PreS. June.

A Luis le gusta el básquet: un cuento sobre el valor de compartir. By PI Kids. Illus. by Jerrod Maruyama. Phoenix International/PI Kids, lib. ed., $25.98 (9798765400081). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

The Magic Cap. By Mireille Messier. Illus. by Charlotte Parent. Milky Way, $18.99 (9781990252211). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

The Making of Butterflies. By Zora Neale Hurston and Ibram X. Kendi. Illus. by Kah Yangni. Amistad, $9.99 (9780063111585). PreS. Mar.

Marker. By Anna Kang. Illus. by Christopher Weyant. Amazon/Two Lions, $17.99 (9781542039611). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

Maud Lewis Colours. By Shanda LaRamee-Jones and Carol McDougall. Illus. by Maud Lewis. Nimbus, $10.95 (9781771088787). PreS. Apr.

Mermaid and Pirate. By Tracey Baptiste. Illus. by Leisl Adams. Algonquin, $18.99 (9781643750774). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Millie and the Goat. By Wang Yimei. Illus. by Gui Tuzi. Phoenix International/Cardinal, lib. ed., $27.29 (9798765400234). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

Mina Belongs Here. By Sandra Niebuhr-Siebert. Illus. by Lars Baus. Floris, $17.95 (9781782508113). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Miss Irwin. By Allen Say. Illus. by the author. Scholastic, $19.99 (9781338300406). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Mole's Quiet Place. By Jane Chapman. Illus. by the author. Tiger Tales, $18.99 (9781664300194). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Mommy's Kisses and Cuddles. By Linda Ashman. Illus. by Jane Massey. Scholastic/Cartwheel, $12.99 (9781338359770). PreS–K. Mar.

The Moon Is a Ball: Stories of Panda and Squirrel. By Ed Franck. Illus. by Thé Tjong-Khing. Gecko, 19.99 (9781776574933). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

The Moon Is My Friend. By Chie Litiatco-Acosta. Illus. by Mela Advincula. Rosen/Windmill, lib. ed., $28.93 (9781538394311). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

Mouse Tells the Truth. By Ella Law. Illus. by Lara Vitória Jäger. DK/DK Children, $12.99 (9780744080292). PreS–K. May.

My Baba's Garden. By Jordan Scott. Illus. by Sydney Smith. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823450831). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

My Brain Is Magic: A Sensory-Seeking Celebration. By Prasha Sooful. Illus. by Geeta Ladi. Soaring Kite, $18.99 (9781953859617). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

My Decodable Readers (series). Crabtree/Little Honey. Individual titles, lib. ed., $20.50. 10-title set price, $205. PreS–Gr. 2. Spring.

My Mommies Built a Treehouse. By Gareth Peter. Illus. by Izzy Evans. Lantana, $18.99 (9781915244185). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

My Sparkly New Boots. By Jenny Goebel. Illus. by Taia Morley. Random/Golden, $5.99 (9780593427415). PreS–K. May.

The Name Game. By Elizabeth Laird. Illus. by Olivia Holden. Tiny Owl, $16.99 (9781910328880). PreS–Gr. 1. Mar.

The Nature Club. By Rebecca Elliott. Illus. by the author. Scholastic/Branches, paper, $5.99 (9781338745467). K–Gr. 2. May.

The Night before Freedom: A Juneteenth Story. By Glenda Armand. Illus. by Corey Barksdale. Crown, $18.99 (9780593567463). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Ninja Life Hacks: Little Ninjas, BIG Emotions. By Mary Nhin. Illus. by the author. Insight Editions, $8.99 (9798886630626). PreS. Mar.

Obioma Plays Football. By Chika Unigwe. Illus. by Chinyere Okoroafor. Cassava Republic, 16.95 (9781913175375). PreS–Gr. 2. Feb.

The Old Man Eating Alone. By Howard Pearlstein. Illus. by Hilde Groven. Clavis, $18.95 (9781605377681). K–Gr. 2. Mar.

Once Cool Duck: King of Cool. By Mike Petrik. Art by the author. Astra/Hippo Park, $12.99 (9781662640186). Gr. 1–3. May.

Our Incredible Library Book (and the Wonderful Journeys It Took). By Caroline Crowe. Illus. by John Joseph. Floris, $17.95 (9781782507413). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Out of the Blue. Robert Tregoning. Illus. by Stef Murphy. Bloomsbury, $18.99 (9781547612390). PreS–Gr. 1. May.

Owl and Penguin: Best Day Ever. By Vikram Madan. Art by the author. Holiday, $14.99 (9780823451517). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

Owl Diaries (series). ABDO/Spotlight. Individual titles, lib. ed., $29.93. 16-title set price, $478.88. K–Gr. 2. Spring.

Papá's Magical Water-Jug Clock. By Jesus Trejo. Illus. by Eliza Kinkz. Astra/Minedition, $18.99 (9781662651045). PreS–Gr. 1. Mar.

Peng's Vase: A Chinese Folktale. Angus Yuen-Killick and Michael Yuen-Killick. Illus. by Paolo Proietti. Red Comet, $18.99 (9781636550466). K–Gr. 3. Apr.

Percy's Perfect Friend. By Lana Button. Illus. by Peggy Collins. Pajama, $18.95 (9781772782813). PreS–Gr. 1. May.

The Perfect Sushi. By Emily Satoko Seo. Illus. by Mique Moriuchi. Barefoot, $16.99 (9781646868377). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Pirate & Penguin. By Mike Allegra. Illus. by Jenn Harney. Page Street, $18.99 (9781645677123). K–Gr. 3. May.

Poppleton in Summer. By Cynthia Rylant. Illus. by Mark Teague. Scholastic/Acorn, paper, $4.99 (9781338566758). K–Gr. 2. May.

Poppy through the Paintings. By Julie Lucht. Illus. by Dan McGeehan. Brown, $16.99 (9781612545905). Gr. 1–3. Apr.

Puddle Song. By Laura Purdie Salas. Illus. by Monique Felix. Creative Company/Creative Editions, $9.99 (9781568463834). PreS. Mar.

The Rainbow Park: A Sunday Adventures Book. By Harold Green, III. Illus. by DeAnn Wiley. Running Press Kids, $8.99 (9780762481538). PreS. May.

Remember. By Joy Harjo. Illus. by Michaela Goade. Random House Studio, $18.99 (9780593484845). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Ruby the Rambunctious. By José Carlos Andrés. Illus. by Lucia Serrano. NubeOcho, $16.99 (9788418599989). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Sasquatch and Squirrel. By Chris Monroe. Illus. by the author. Carolrhoda, lib. ed., $18.99 (9781728404660). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

See Us Bloom: Poems on Compassion, Acceptance, and Bravery. By Kyunghee Kim. Illus. by Emily Paik. Modern Marigold, $19.95 (9781735031941). K–Gr. 2. Apr.

A Smart, Smart School. By Sharon Creech. Illus. by Anait Semirdzhyan. Harper, $19.99 (9780063059610). PreS–Gr. 3. June.

Some Dogs. By Lydia Nichols. Illus. by the author. Gibbs Smith, $12.99 (9781423663706). PreS. Apr.

Something about a Bear. By Jackie Morris. Illus. by the author. Otter-Barry, $29.95 (9781913074289). K–Gr. 2. Jan.

Sometimes I Kaploom. By Rachel Vail. Illus. by Hyewon Yum. Scholastic/Orchard, $18.99 (9781338840308). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

Sometimes, a Tiger. By Z. B. Asterplume. Illus. by the author. Macmillan/Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250823441). PreS–Gr. 3. July.

A Song for Juneteenth. By Zetta Elliot. Illus. by David Anthony Geary. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316167727). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

The Song That Called Them Home. By David A. Robertson. Illus. by Maya McKibbin. Tundra, $18.99 (9780735266704). PreS–Gr. 3. Apr.

Sunshine Pie. By Sarah Edmonds. Illus. by the author. Welbeck Flame, paper, $9.95 (9781801301114). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

A Superhero like You. By Dr. Ranj. Illus. by Liam Darcy. Hodder Children's, paper, $12.99 (9781444959000). PreS–Gr. 1. July.

Tap! Tap! Tap! Dance, Dance, Dance. By Hervé Tullet. Illus. by the author. Chronicle, $19.99 (9781797221465). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Teddy's Midnight Adventure. By Yoko Mori. Illus. by the author. Tr. by Cathy Hirano. Pushkin, $18.95 (9781782694014). K–Gr. 2. June.

There's a Monster in the Kitchen! By Patricia Strauch. Illus. by Natalia Aguerre. Tr. by Kit Maude. Tapioca Stories, $18.95 (9781734783964). PreS–Gr. 1. May.

This Is the Planet Where I Live. By K. L. Going. Illus. by Debra Frasier. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane, $18.99 (9781481465632). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Tierra, tierrita / Earth, Little Earth. By Jorge Argueta. Illus. by Felipe Ugalde Alcántara. Arte Público/Piñata, $18.95 (9781558859678). K–Gr. 3. May.

To My Panik: To My Daughter. By Nadia Sammurtok. Illus. by Pelin Turgut. Inhabit, $17.95 (9781772274486). PreS–K. May.

The Together Tree. By Aisha Saeed. Illus. by LeUyen Pham. Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads, $18.99 (9781534462960). PreS–Gr. 3. May.

Too Many Hugs: A Book about Consent. By Yvonne Pearson. Illus. by Maria Burobkina. Bushel & Peck, $17.99 (9781638191483). PreS–Gr. 1. Apr.

The Truth about Dragons. By Julie Leung. Illus. by Hanna Cha. Holt, $18.99 (9781250820587). PreS–Gr. 3. Aug.

Twice as Many Friends / El doble de amigos. By Brian Armador. Illus. by Vanina Starkoff. Barefoot, $16.99 (9781646868452). PreS–Gr. 2. Apr.

Under the Blanket Sky. By Tim Fischer. Illus. by the author. Doubleday, $18.99 (9780593645918). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Unicorn NOT Wanted. By Fred Blunt. Illus. by the author. Quarto/Happy Yak, $18.99 (9780711281325). PreS–K. May.

We Are One. By Jackie Azúa Kramer. Illus. by Raissa Figueroa and Niña Mata. Amazon/Two Lions, $17.99 (9781542016940). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

We Are the Rainbow! The Colors of Pride. By Claire Winslow. Illus. by Riley Samels. Phoenix International/Sunbird, lib.ed., $24.69 (9798765400227). PreS–Gr. 2. Jan.

We Belong to the Drum / Mistikwaskihk kitipêyimikonaw. By Sandra Lamouche. Illus. by Azby Whitecalf. Tr. by Delorese Greyeyes Sand. Orca, $21.95 (9781459834385). PreS–K. May.

What to Do with a Stick. By Jane Yolen. Illus. Paolo Domeniconi. Creative Company/Creative Editions, $16.99 (9781568463650). Gr. 1–3. Mar.

When Things Aren't Going Right, Go Left. By Marc Colagiovanni. Illus. by Peter H. Reynolds. Scholastic/Orchard, $18.99 (9781338831184). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Where Did Momo's Hair Go? By Stéphanie Boyer. Illus. by Caroline Hamel. Tr. by Carine Laforest. CrackBoom!, $17.95 (9782898024160). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

Why We Need Teachers. By Gregory Lang. Illus. by Lisa Alderson. Sourcebooks/Wonderland, $10.99 (9781728260518). K–Gr. 3. May.

The Yellow Handkerchief / El pañuelo amarillo. By Donna Barba Higuera. Illus. by Cynthia Alonso. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419760143). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

Yenebi's Drive to School. By Sendy Santamaria. Illus. by the author. Chronicle, $17.99 (9781797216294). PreS–Gr. 2. June.

You Are Loved: A Book about Families. By Margaret O'Hair. Illus. by Sofia Cardoso. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338850079). PreS–Gr. 3. Mar.

You Hung the Moon. By Jessica Urlichs. Illus. by Sarah Reinhardt. Hachette Australia, $17.99 (9781869714871). PreS–K. Apr.

You Need to Chill! By Juno Dawson. Illus. by Laura Hughes. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky, $18.99 (9781728275529). PreS–Gr. 2. May.

Zebra in the Mirror. By Tina Arnuš Pupis. Illus. by Marta Bartolj. Interlink/Crocodile, $18.95 (9781623717452). K–Gr. 3. June.

Adult

All the Dangerous Things.

By Stacy Willingham. Read by Karissa Vacker.

2023. 10hrs. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250880871).

It's been a year since Isabelle Drake's infant son, Mason, was kidnapped. The police are still investigating, but so far they have no leads or clues. Isabelle has spent the time obsessing over the disappearance, speaking at true-crime events, and compulsively pursuing the kidnapper. She hasn't had a good night's sleep in over a year, and her insomnia is making her fear for her sanity. Also haunting Isabelle are her childhood bouts with sleepwalking, and the years-ago death of her younger sister, Margaret, for which she feels responsible. In an attempt to find her son, Isabelle agrees to be interviewed by Waylon Spencer, a true-crime podcaster. But not all is as it seems with Waylon, who claims his own sister's murder is his inspiration for solving these cold cases. Reader Vacker does a remarkable job voicing the main characters and keeping the tension high. She varies Isabelle's voice, giving her a strained grieving tone as a mother as well as a childish feel as the story flashes back to Isabelle's childhood and the death of her younger sister. Most amazingly, Vacker sounds completely convincing as she lowers her tones to read the male parts of Isabelle's husband, Ben, and the podcaster, Waylon. Mystery and true crime fans will be drawn in and ultimately satisfied by this complex, tense tale read expertly by a talented narrator. —*Candace Smith*

STACY WILLINGHAM
ALL THE DANGEROUS THINGS

The Darkness Manifesto: Our Light Pollution, Night Ecology, and the Ancient Rhythms that Sustain Life.

By Johan Eklöf. Read by Owen Findlay.

Feb. 2023. 5.5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797153919).

In this electrified era of ever-decreasing natural darkness, we lose animal habitats and disrupt human circadian rhythms. These changes have broad consequences, from increasing pesticide use to persistent sleep deprivation. Eklöf's manifesto is impassioned, well-researched, and compelling. Findlay's narration is ideally suited to the topic. His cadence is steady but engaging, and his warm tones convey curiosity, which keeps the listener engaged throughout. Practiced phrasing makes the scientific elements accessible to listeners and a clear translation of the author's passion makes the recording feel personal and creates an empathetic connection with the listener. Findlay, an actor of stage, radio, and screen, speaks in a English accent for this Swedish-authored title and ably handles non-English words. A fine and enjoyable recording on an important but often overlooked topic, this is a worthy addition to popular science audio collections. —*Heather Booth*

Dr. No.

By Percival Everett. Read by Amir Abdullah.

2022. 6.5hr. Tantor, DD (9798765065709).

Unpredictable Everett last had readers laughing (guiltily) over murder in *The Trees*, which earned him a well-deserved spot on the 2022 Booker Prize Shortlist. His latest presents audiences with, well, nothing! It's firmly read by actor Abdullah who energetically makes something unforgettable of Everett's indefatigable erudition. Anti-hero Wala Kitu (Wala means *nothing* in Tagalog, Kitu *nothing* in Swahili) is a distinguished Brown University math professor who has spent his career "contemplating and searching for nothing." He's actually Ralph Townsend, who Everett groupies will recognize as the multiply-kidnapped linguistic child prodigy from *Glyph*. This Ralph's parental lineage aligns—artist mother (Eve), English professor (Douglas)—although Douglas "ended up driving a taxi." Wala is paid $3 million by billionaire John Milton Bradley Sill, who admits, "I want to be a Bond villain" and rob Fort Knox, unlike Goldfinger, not for its gold but to take "nothing": "How much power must there be for anyone who can possess nothing?" Walu's reluctant "okay" sets in motion everything, exposing racism, elitism, police brutality, gender inequity, and maybe a few bad novels and films along the way. —*Terry Hong*

Fake Money, Blue Smoke.

By Josh Haven. Read by Justin Price.

2022. 6.5hr. HighBridge, DD (9781696608916).

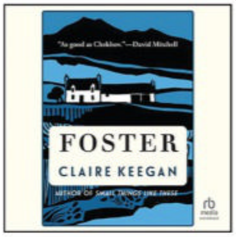
When Matt Kubelsky is finally released from jail, he is shocked to be picked up by a former girlfriend he hasn't seen in decades. This ex, Kelly Haggerty, has kept herself busy counterfeiting currency. Kelly now needs Matt's help to complete her biggest scam to date. *Fake Money, Blue Smoke* has a bit of everything, from a train heist to art forgery and a whole lot of revenge. Justin Price delivers a narration that brings together all the twists and turns into one fluid story. Price's steady, even-keeled delivery is a perfect match for the methodical Matt, who is unfazed by almost everything at this point in his life. The story crosses the globe and the U.S., allowing Price to utilize a range of accents, all fitting and consistently done. This is an incredibly violent story, but those who can handle it will be drawn into the quick-moving, action-packed journey. —*Lesley Cyrier*

Foster.

By Claire Keegan. Read by Aoife McMahon.

2022. 1.5hr. HighBridge, DD (9781696604901).

Keegan's lauded, 2022 Booker-shortlisted *Small Things like These* brought the Irish writer well-deserved attention across the pond, inspiring the overdue stateside importation of her earlier work, *Foster*, originally published in the UK in 2010. The novella is another sparse but deeply, achingly affecting narrative about complicated parent/child bonds, embodied with empathic precision by award-winning Irish compatriot McMahon. An unnamed narrator drives with her father "deep into Wexford towards the coast where [her] mother's people came from." The girl is to be delivered to distant relatives she imagines on the journey there to be a tall woman "making me drink milk still hot from the cow," and a man who will "take me down on the tractors and buy me red lemonade and crisps." While "there is no sign, anywhere, of a child" when she arrives, the couple readily bestow kind, gentle parenting that restores the girl's childhood as she's unconditionally fed, nurtured, loved. Their future together, alas, can't be guaranteed. At less than 1.5 hours, *Foster* might suggest a quick listen, but readers will want to hit play again (and again) to appreciate McMahon's mesmerizing nuances that transform a wary child into a cherished daughter. *Foster* is only Keegan's second audiobook, but hopefully proves to be a bellwether for more aural adaptations to come. —*Terry Hong*



How Not to Drown in a Glass of Water.

By Angie Cruz. Read by Rossmery Almonte and Kimberly M. Wetherell.

2022. 6hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250868817).

Actor/director Kimberly M. Wetherell crisply opens with an official introduction to the 12 "sessions and documents that may or may not have supported the final report and recommendations" for Cara Bonita, a 56-year-old Dominican immigrant applying for "whatever job needs to be done" through New York's Senior Workforce Program. Audiobook newbie Rossmery Almonte impressively commands most of the recording as fiercely tenacious yet surprisingly charming Cara. That Almonte shares Dominican roots with both her character and author Cruz (*Dominicana*, 2019) undoubtedly enhances the expert production. In between Almonte's pitch-perfect 12 "sessions"—in which Cara reveals her immigration, familial dysfunctions, and supportive (and sometimes acrimonious) relationships—are fully-produced interstitials, complete with pertinent sound effects. Multiple forms, for example, must be filled out; as Wetherell reads the information requests, Almonte provides the answers over the noise of well-timed keyboard clicks. Doors open and close, the interview prep program encourages with jaunty music, an overdue invoice gets underscored with a background adding machine. Unemployed she may be, but Cara repeatedly proves she's capable of getting just about any job done. —*Terry Hong*

Local.

By Jessica Machado. Read by Mapuana Makia.

2023. 7hr. Brilliance, DD (9781978694644).

Local is an honest and moving story of a woman considering the personal significance of her heritage after spending much of her life running from and even rejecting it. Machado writes with brutal honesty about her mistakes, her regrets, and the consequences of her troubling decisions. Mapuana Makia handles the story adeptly and has a deliberate clarity that helps the listener absorb sections exploring Hawaiian culture and mythology. Her commitment to that tone and pacing also makes clear the book is a memoir, handling the sometimes-challenging subject matter as a retelling; never going too far to infuse dramatic flair. She instead lets the author's words carry the weight. This is not to say her read lacks depth or flavor, though. She's an excellent choice for the material. Audiophiles may notice some recording artifacts and issues with presence that could have been addressed, but none are so egregious as to affect the overall experience. —*Adam Schulmerich*

Murder at the Majestic Hotel.

By Clara McKenna. Read by Sarah Zimmerman.

2022. 9hr. HighBridge, DD (9781696607551).

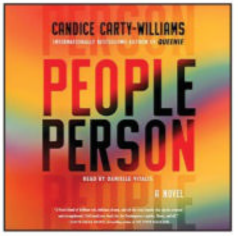
1905, Majestic Hotel, York, England. Horace Wingrove, president of the noted Wingrove Chocolate Company, slips a tip to a dishonest desk clerk and appropriates the hotel's wedding suite, originally reserved for Viscount Lyndy and Lady Stella Lyndhurst to begin their honeymoon. Now housed in the Royal Suite, the Lyndhursts' wish for a quiet honeymoon proves unlikely as arguments involving Wingrove are heard; an invitation is received to meet with young Royals visiting York; Mr. Wingrove is found dead in his bed; and the formula for his popular cream-milk confection can't be located. Narrator Zimmerman easily switches between the warm, informal American accent of Stella and the precise, formal speech of Lyndy. Add to the mix Stella's mother's Southern drawl and a variety of British accents reflective of social class. Once Mr. Wingrove's body is discovered, Stella is determined to find out why his pillows are missing, what caused his death, and who stole the missing candy formula. This is the fourth in the Stella and Lyndy Mystery series. —*Pam Spencer Holley*

People Person.

By Candice Carty-Williams. Read by Danielle Vitalis.

2022. 10hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797100999).

While Jamaican immigrant Cyril Pennington insisted he loved his gold Jeep "more than anything else in his life," he certainly never managed to stay away from women. Four produced his five neglected children: oldest Nikisha, 19, and youngest Prynce, 9 ½, share the same mother; 17-year-old Danny's got the single white parent; Dimple and Lizzie are a mere few weeks apart at almost 14. "So none of you ever buck up with each other on road and fall in love or have sex," he loads them together into his prized Jeep promising ice cream—just that one time. Fast forward some 16 years when Dimple, now 30, thinks she's killed her abusive boyfriend. Forget the police, instead she calls Nikisha instead, who shows up with all the siblings in tow. They may not like each other—never mind even *knowing* each other—but they're family. Chaos and comedy ensue. British actor Vitalis, relatively new to audiobooks, is an utter delight ensuring each sibling gets clearly, individually heard: efficient Nikisha, smooth Danny, flustered Dimple, angry Lizzie, sweet Prynce. Their mothers, grandmothers, various partners, and even that sly father all get deftly, effortlessly ciphered. Shenanigans might have meandered too far or been unconvincing on the page, but Vitalis will make listeners believe. —*Terry Hong*



The Power of the Holy Spirit's Names.

By Tony Evans. Read by Calvin Robinson.

2023. 5.5hr. Two Words, DD (9781666623147).

Recognized for transformative and simplified bible analyses, Dr. Tony Evans here teaches listeners how the Holy Spirit is the least understood, most marginalized, misused, underappreciated, and forgotten attribute of God. Evans is an author, speaker, and senior pastor at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, Texas, and president of the Urban Alternative. He states: "The more we engage with Him, the more power, purpose, and peace He gives to our lives." Twelve 30-minute chapters categorically summarize the powerful benefits, functions, and characteristics of the Holy Spirit. This important analysis, through a theological lens, is supported only by the enduring Word of God. Robinson's natural baritone enriches Evans' exposition with a gentle authoritative tone. He succeeds in facilitating an exploratory listening experience that delivers valuable biblical evidence about the Holy Spirit's character in order to stimulate Christian spiritual development. This audiobook is an educational asset to enhance popular Christian theology and bible study sections. —*Vanessa Denby*

Saturnalia.

By Stephanie Feldman. Read by Courtney Patterson.

2022. 6.5hr. HighBridge, DD (9781696610292).

Feldman returns with a novel that, at its core, is about a young woman trying to overcome trauma. Set in near-future Philadelphia against a backdrop of increasingly catastrophic effects of climate change, main character Nina gets pulled back into the life of secret societies she thought she had left behind when a friend recruits her to steal something from the Saturn Club. Set over the course of the Saturnalia celebration (winter solstice) with plenty of flashbacks to years past, we follow Nina through the twists and turns of the night as the novel deftly veers into speculative-fiction territory. Veteran reader Patterson delivers the story in a clear, easy-to-understand fashion. The characters have enough differentiation to tell who is who, and Nina is portrayed in a way that feels like we really get to know her and what she is going through. Overall, a well-narrated story of picking up the pieces for new beginnings. —*Matt Matkowski*

Screaming on the Inside: The Unsustainability of American Motherhood.

By Jessica Grose. Read by Suehyla El-Attar.

2022. 6.5hrs. HarperAudio, CD, $25.29 (9780063078383).

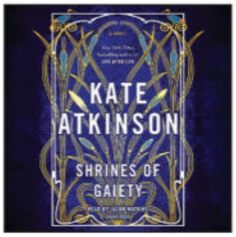
Long gone are the days when it was enough for mothers to stay home, keep the house clean, and take care of their kids. Today's mother, under the influence of social media influencers and high expectations, must raise her children, succeed in a high-level job, and remain model-thin, all with a smile on her face. Beneath these smiles, however, are feelings of exhaustion, guilt, and anger, according to parenting writer Grose. Throw in the pandemic, and moms are literally "screaming on the inside." Grose follows the path of motherhood through the ages, showing how it has become increasingly competitive and demanding. She weaves in personal stories, data from studies, and interviews with a wide range of women to support her claims. Reader El-Attar has a brisk, no-nonsense tone as she delivers the message. Irony comes through as she relates the legacy of the liberated 1970s and considers the need for mothers to accept their mixed feelings about parenthood. Moms feeling overwhelmed and underrepresented will find solace in the author's honesty and commonsense suggestions for change. —*Candace Smith*

Shrines of Gaiety.

By Kate Atkinson. Read by Jason Watkins.

2022. 16hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593634110).

Award-winning English actor Watkins' limited audio credits belie his substantial talent in embodying prodigious Atkinson's latest unforgettable cast representing diverse ages, genders, and backgrounds set in mid-1920s London. Atkinson's hub is Nellie Coker—based on the real-life "queen of Soho's clubland" Kate Meyrick (revealed in the ending author's note)—whose 1926 release from prison is met with considerable fanfare. Regaining her considerable power is not without major challenges, including reining in some of her own children: an outwardly confident heir apparent, a pathetic gambler, a besotted traitor. Certain legal gatekeepers can't be bought, particularly



DCI John Frobisher, whose devotion to his long-suffering wife is wavering as he furtively imagines the possibility of a different future with librarian Gwendolen, who arrives in London in search of two missing girls. Having survived the Great War as a nurse, Gwendolen just might make her Frobisher's ideal spy to infiltrate Nellie's dens of iniquity, undoubtedly linked to the corpses being pulled from the murky Thames. Atkinson, of course, gives each character expansive backstories, made even more convincing by Watkins' impressively skillful narration: Nellie commands, Niven observes, Frobisher covets, Gwendolen dreams amidst many remarkable others who ensure a seemingly hefty 16 hours pass all too quickly. —*Terry Hong*

★ Tell Me I'm Worthless.

By Alison Rumfitt. Read by Nicky Endres.

2023. 8.5hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250882806).

"AMBITIOUS, BRUTAL, AND BRILLIANT"
TELL ME I'M WORTHLESS
ALISON RUMFITT

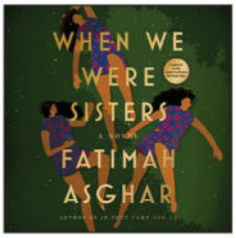
In present-day fascist Britain, Alice, a trans woman, and Ila, a transphobic lesbian, blame each other for their physical and emotional traumas. The ex-friends and lovers' suffering at each others' hands began several years prior when they visited a haunted house. Together, Alice, Ila, and their friend Hannah entered the house, and while Alice and Ila left the same night, Hannah became lost to the house. Now Alice and Ila must return to the house to understand its true nature and to try to recover their friend. Transfeminine actor Nicky Endres' narration is chilling throughout, as they voice the perspectives of Alice, Ila, and the house at an easy, relaxed pace. Their voice maintains a lulling and melodious sing-song quality, which acts in opposition to the horrors portrayed in the book. Distinct voices are used throughout, and they do equal justice to all genders represented in the book, lending a believable, natural quality to the narration. Listeners will particularly enjoy their depiction of the house, with its resonant and gravelly voice full of menace. Make sure listeners pay close attention to the content warning given by the author at the start of the book, as the many traumas experienced by the characters are graphically depicted. This will be a memorable listen for those who choose it. —*Suzanne Temple*

★ When We Were Sisters.

By Fatimah Asghar. Read by a full cast.

2022. 5.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593611043).

"In a city, a man dies," Asghar's debut novel opens, setting in motion the abrupt maturation of the dead man's three children, the eponymous sisters whose Muslim American coming-of-age is narrated mostly by the youngest, Kausar, whose later transformation will further illuminate the titular "were." New to audiobooks, actor Farah Kidwai expertly commands the majority of the recording, her soft, measured performance making her the ideal observer of the coming of age of three orphaned daughters—the oldest just nine—entrusted to a maternal uncle who is hardly trustworthy. While Uncle keeps his estranged white wife and two sons in suburban comfort, he hides the nieces in a dark apartment filled with neglected animals in cages he calls a "zoo," leaving them alone but for the temporary installation of immigrants to whom he episodically rents rooms. Relative newbie Kamran Khan embodies the male voices, growling through Uncle's wheedling and threats, then mournfully subdued as the dead father. Seasoned, versatile Deepti Gupta voices the additional women's voices, especially heartbreaking as the children's mother on her deathbed. Reminiscent of her award-winning poetry collection, *If They Come for Us*, Ashgar's prose is equally lyrical, elliptical, multilayered, and definitively, deftly enhanced by her audio trio. —*Terry Hong*



Youth

Bloodmarked.

By Tracy Deonn. Read by Joniece Abbott-Pratt.

Nov. 2023. 22hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797139746). Gr. 7–12.

Beginning where *Legendborn* left off, Bree is desperate to save Nick and struggling to control Arthur's ancestral powers. Before she has time to learn to wield her new abilities, she is betrayed by those who are questioning their loyalty pledges to her. On the run from both the order and the demons who seek to end the line of Arthur, Bree has no choice but to confront her roots and discover how her ancestors led her to this place. Abbott-Pratt returns to narrate the second book in this series. Fans of the first novel will enjoy continuing Bree's story with Abbott-Pratt's skilled narration. Her engrossing narration and distinct voices for the multitude of characters and their accents keep the listener engaged in the adventures of Bree and her companions. —*Melissa Wheelock*

Briarcliff Prep.

By Brianna Peppins. Read by Imani Parks.

2022. 11.5hr. Disney, DD (9781368093064). Gr. 9–12.

Peppins' debut contemporary YA novel is a necessary and unapologetic ode to Black girlhood. Avielle "Avi" LeBeau finally has her turn to attend Briarcliff Prep along with her sister, Belle, who is a senior. Briarcliff is one of a very few surviving Historically Black Boarding Schools. Nervous, but eager to make her mark on the school, Avi experiences the sisterhood, rivalries, and nuances that are uniquely felt at an HBBS. When Avi finds out a secret about her sister's boyfriend, she is forced to choose how to show up for Belle. Read by Imani Parks, actress and audiobook darling, *Briarcliff Prep* is narrated as it was written: with heart and reverence for Black culture. Peppins herself graduated from Spelman, an HBCU and Parks brings that personal relevance to her narration. Takeaways of dealing with disappointment, navigating high school, and confronting hard choices, *Briarcliff* is a great option for upper middle school and high school students looking to immerse themselves in a relatable and real read. —*Tracy Ramey*

Lumara.

By Melissa Landers. Read by Marni Penning.

2022. 8.5hr. Disney, DD (9781368082396). Gr. 8–12.

In Thalia's world, Mystics practice magic freely. She is surprised to learn that her boyfriend, Nathaniel, is a Mystic who draws power from his home island of Lumara. He has kept it from her because Thalia hates Mystics after one duped her out of her savings. Despite her unease, Thalia agrees to visit Lumara. Upon arrival, she experiences things that she never did when off the island. Thalia learns the island is trying to help her and that her heart condition may be tied up in Nathaniel's family history. Can Thalia unravel all the mysteries in time to save herself and those she loves? Penning excels at engaging the listener by using wonderful character-voicing variations. Additionally, the use of tone changes—ranging from variations in volume to anguished cries—help the listener feel the strong emotions that run through Landers' story. Suggest to listeners who enjoy magical romance with a touch of action and adventure. —*Colleen Seisser*

The Three Billy Goats Gruff.

By Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen. Read by Mac Barnett.

2022. 10.5min. Scholastic, DD (9781338897616). PreS–Gr. 2.

The classic story of three savvy brother goats, a troll, and a bridge gets an impish makeover in this mostly faithful retelling. Barnett and Klassen work seamlessly together, and listeners will want to listen along with the print for best effect. Barnett's clever rhymes and wordplay ("A goat flambe with candied yams. A goat clambake, with goat, not clams!") peppered throughout the book are matched and elevated by Klassen's muted artwork, which is somehow both detailed and rudimentary. The twist at the end is satisfying and very, very funny, and the idyllic picture of the grazing goats is warm, soft, and inviting, making crossing that bridge very tempting indeed. Though contributing to the overall nostalgic feeling of the book, the music—especially the whistle and flute—and sound effects pull a bit of focus from the relationship between the words, pictures, and listener. However, Barnett's voice carries the story beautifully, with subtle shifts in tone for each character. It's well paced and narrated and a delight to hear the book read as (one assumes) it sounds in the author's head. —*Caitlin Savage*

Spotlight on **Middle-Grade Fiction**

Art from ***Mihi Ever After.***

Infected.

By Terrance Crawford. Read by Fred Berman.

2023. 2hr. Scholastic, DD (9781339004617). Gr. 3–7.

Based on the popular apocalyptic video game *Piggy*, this story about a resilient boy named Ben experiencing several adventures while searching for his best friend feels like a rush of adrenaline. Energetic narrator Berman reads with a near-breathless urgency for this twisted tale of an infection turning the citizens of the formerly peaceful island of Lucella into evil giant animals. He maintains crystal-clear diction throughout, making every action scene (and the book contains several) easy to follow and engaging. Startling appearances from immense foul-tempered pigs punctuate the narrative, and Berman revs up his voice to give the listener a fun jolt during these passages. The action kicks into an even higher gear when the youthful-sounding Ben starts receiving transmissions on his walkie-talkie from a mysterious quivery-voiced stranger seeking help. Joining Ben on his quest are his crossbow-wielding new pal Sally, the gruff Officer Doggy, a tough wise-guy badger, and a rather giddy muscular bull. The story ends on a cliff-hanger that will make *Piggy* fans (old and new) want to know what happens next. Creepy instrumental music begins and ends the entertaining program. —*Brian Wilson*

Mihi Ever After.

By Tae Keller. Read by Triya Leong.

2022. 3.5hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250865342). Gr. 3–6.

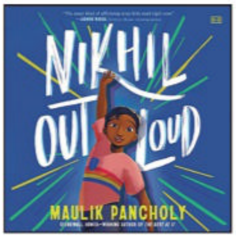
"You're not the princess type." So ends Mihi's friendship with her (now former) best friend. So begins an innovative coming-of-age fairy tale untelling in which three young girls confront racism, meet heroes, and answer the question of whether being a princess is really all it's cracked up to be. The story is painfully relevant to all too many kids, and the narrator brings it to life in a way that is sure to pull at any listener's heartstrings. Yet the author couches these big emotions in a fun and hopeful fantasy adventure that, though the plot lines wrap up well enough to make a stand-alone book, will still leave readers on the edge of their seats for the sequel. Fortunately, listeners are treated to a sneak peak of the next volume at the end to leave them clamoring for more. —*Christian Lash*

Nikhil Out Loud.

By Maulik Pancholy. Read by the author.

2022. 6hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063091955). Gr. 5–8.

In this delightful listen, a group of eighth-grade theater kids fight back against homophobic protesters in their community. The titular Nikhil, a young voice actor famous for portraying the cartoon character Raj Reddy, grapples with a cross-country move with his mom to help care for his ailing Nana. Nikhil develops strong relationships with his Gujarati Nana and Nani, while also dealing with family struggles, managing his fame at his new school, and his decision to be open about being gay. Maulik Pancholy's skillful narration brings Nikhil to life by deftly weaving vocal tones to portray the talented young actor. Varied voices are used to portray the large cast of characters, and each character is consistent throughout. Nana and Nani's Gujarati accents are portrayed with authentic appreciation, giving the characters a warm and loving tone. Nikhil and his school friends, DeSean, Monica, and Mateo, are all portrayed with a distinct style, highlighting the characters' feelings and relation to the story. Pancholy's excellent narration has listeners cheering for Nikhil, his family, and his friends as they unite to overcome and find joy. This timely tale about being your true self and finding loving support through difficult circumstances is a superb listen for families and middle school readers who enjoy school stories —*Michelle Kilty*



The Stars Did Wander Darkling.

By Colin Meloy. Read by Kirt Graves.

2022. 9hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063015548). Gr. 5–8.

With strong appeal for fans of *Stranger*

Classics Corner

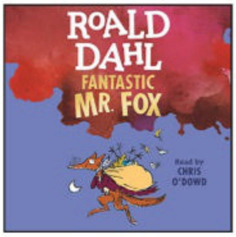
Classics Corner highlights new recordings of classic titles.

Fantastic Mr. Fox.

By Roald Dahl. Read by Chris O'Dowd.

2022. 1hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593683552). Gr. 3–6.

Dahl's writing is a pure delight to read aloud, something that Irish actor O'Dowd embraces wholeheartedly in this recording—previously only available as part of a collection—of the beloved classic tale of wily Mr. Fox and his clever farmland hijinks as he defends his family and attempts to defeat the terrible farmers Boggis, Bunce, and Bean. In a performance that surpasses that of just a simple reading, this is a *production* that will entertain from the first moments through many subsequent listen-throughs. O'Dowd's crafting of characters is impeccable: Mr. Fox is dignified and caring, with a received English accent and dash of cavalier bravado. Mrs. Fox's soft tones carry all of her admiration for her husband. The farmers' voices send a shiver up the listener's spine as each farmer's particular brand of contemptibility scrambles over the others in conversation. Badger's breathy Scottish tones further endear listeners to the soft-hearted character. But the magic here doesn't end with voices! Sound effects, from the bang! bang! of a farmer's rifle to the scritch-scratch of a shovel to the (gag!) squitch of a finger in a gooey ear accentuate the action. Tractor noises add drama as their threat looms over the Foxs' den. O'Dowd sings the rhymes in the text, and his pacing throughout is akin to a wholly engaging one-man show. Such effects as approaching footsteps and echoes add to the sense of the stage. Terrific fun for middle-grade listeners and far beyond. —*Heather Booth*

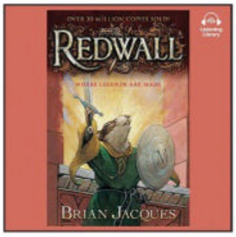


Redwall.

By Brian Jacques. Read by Ariyon Bakare.

2022. 13.5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593632543). Gr. 3–7.

Originally published in 1986, Jacques' classic fantasy story about peaceful mice fighting to defend Redwall Abbey from a band of sinister rats led by Cluny the Scourge is finally available to listeners. To defeat Cluny, the sword of the legendary founder of Redwall Abbey must be found, and a young mouse named Matthias is determined to find it. Bakare infuses the words with emotion and matches his tone to the action, conveying all the fear, exhaustion, excitement, and triumph of the story. He gives most of the many characters unique voices: Matthias sounds youthful and curious, Cluny's evil character comes through in his disdainful drawl, and the snowy owl is perfectly imperious and cold. There is one editing error where a word was noticeably spliced in after recording, but it's an otherwise seamless production. Young fantasy lovers will be thrilled with this one, as will older listeners who grew up reading the Redwall books. —*Ashley Young*



Things, The Goonies, and other 1980s-set stories of kids banding together, sussing out threatening powers, and battling forces far beyond what they imagined they could, Meloy's middle-grade horror adventure takes listeners into the coastal Oregon town of Seaham, where Archie and his friends Athena, Oliver, and Chris uncover an eerie threat to their community. There are many high points in Graves' narration. He maintains subtle accents (Swedish Brigita, upper-midwestern Randy) and recognizable tones (Athena's post-hippie parents, a Valley-girl lilt for Oliver's sister) to distinguish a number of side characters and crafts individual and consistent voices for each of the four kids. Oliver, whose speech is described with a slight th-fronting (calling his friend Afena instead of Athena), is voiced with much more impeded speech patterns than are described in the text. For the powerful inhuman forces that the kids combat, Graves lowers his voice and adds a menacing tone and tenor to inspire chills and keep listeners on edge, ratcheting up the tension and pacing as danger steps ever closer. —*Heather Booth*

★ What Happened to Rachel Riley?

By Claire Swinarski. Read by a full cast.

2023. 6hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063213128). Gr. 5–8.

As the new kid in Madison, there are a lot of things Chicago transplant Anna doesn't know. Like where to find her favorite Polish food, or how this new junior high celebrates birthdays, or why *nobody* talks to Rachel Riley. Ferdelle Capistrano leads this full cast as Anna, who embarks on a journalistic investigation into just what happened last year to make a formerly popular girl a complete outcast. Inspired by her favorite podcaster, Anna crafts a podcast of her own that will serve as an application to a prestigious summer camp. The kids involved agree to be interviewed; all will tell her something, but never enough. Interspersed are emails between school staff and parents denoted with an electronic ding, notes between friends that begin with a pencil-scratching sound, and text messages and their accompanying "sent" tones. The portions narrated as a podcast can be identified by Anna's slightly overmodulated voice and a small hiss that one might expect from an amateur sound technician. That is not to say the production itself is amateur—far from it! This audiobook shows tremendous care in presenting a multiformat novel for the ears in an engaging and format-specific style. For Anna's Polish-speaking mother, Capistrano makes the slightest shift in cadence; for her older sister, her tone becomes deeper and a bit jaded. Reena Dutt ably distinguishes between BFFs. Alexandra Hunter as Rachel displays the character's suffering as well as her tenacity and focus. In all, an inspired version of this notable title about sexual harassment, bullying, and ostracism in middle school. —*Heather Booth*

WHAT HAPPENED
TO RACHEL RILEY?
CLAIRE SWINARSKI

Top 10 Middle-Grade Fiction on Audio

Audiobooks for middle-grade listeners sparkle with energy. These Top 10 titles are filled with the heartfelt real-life stuff of middle-graders as well as astounding, fantastical adventures. All received starred reviews in *Booklist* between April 15, 2021, and February 1, 2023. —*Heather Booth*

allergic
Megan Wagner Lloyd
with Michelle Mee Nutter

Allergic. By Megan Wagner Lloyd and Michelle Mee Nutter. Read by a full cast. 2021. 2hr. Scholastic, DD (9781338751048). Gr. 4–6.

This graphic novel about a girl allergic to the pet of her dreams receives a first-rate full-cast audio treatment with production elements that create a vibrant radio-drama feel.

Answers in the Pages. By David Levithan. Read by a full cast. 2022. 4hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593608241). Gr. 3–7.

Three narrators help make sense of the layered story about Donovan, his classmates, and a book that creates some controversy.

Coraline. By Neil Gaiman. Read by a full cast. 2022. 4hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063243255). Gr. 5–8.

This 20th anniversary celebration of Gaiman's modern youth classic gets a full-cast treatment. This outstanding immersive audiobook will enchant adults and children.

Ikenga. By Nnedi Okorafor. Read by Ben Onwukwe. 2021. 9.5hr. Tantor, DD (9781705280188). Gr. 6–8.

Onwukwe's narration of this powerful middle-grade fantasy set in Nigeria makes the main character's raw vulnerability palpable, and listeners will celebrate when he finally embraces his magic and strengths.

Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone. By Tae Keller. Read by the author and a full cast. 2022. 7hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593559987). Gr. 4–7.

Mallory wants to help find Jennifer after realizing her potential role in the girl's disappearance. A full cast narration brings clarity to this dual–time line tale of mystery and middle-grade social drama.

Journal of a Traveling Girl. By Nadine Neema. Read by the author. 2022. 1.75hr. Tundra, DD (9781774882931). Gr. 3–5.

In this year's Top of the List for Youth Audio, the author, backed by subtle but scene-setting sound effects, guides listeners through a young First Nations girl's journey of self- and cultural-discovery.

Julieta and the Diamond Enigma. By Luisana Duarte Armendáriz. Read by a full cast. 2021. 4hr. Live Oak, CD (9781430144700). Gr. 3–5.

This international art-heist adventure features a bilingual family and global travel, and the full cast presents a range of accents with panache.

Kaleidoscope. By Brian Selznick. Read by Gwendoline Christie. 2021. 3hr. Scholastic, DD (9781338794168). Gr. 5–9.

Selznick's collection is brought to spinning, colorful life by an impeccable production and Christie's narration. The audio features Selznick with an author's note and an interview about developing the story for audio.

The Lucky Ones. By Linda Williams Jackson. Read by Reginald James. 2022. 5.5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593632253). Gr. 4–8.

James creates a moving listening experience through varied and believable voices for Ellis Earl and his community during Senator Robert Kennedy's Southern Poverty Tour in 1967.

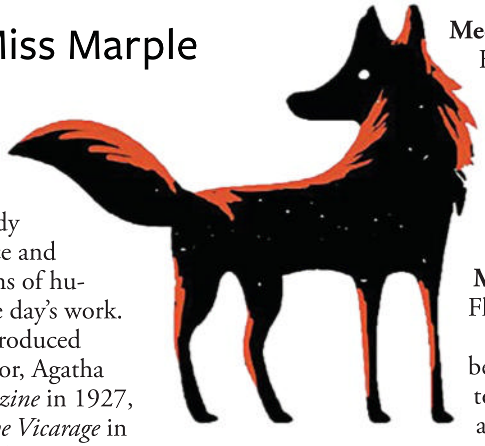
The Outlaws Scarlett and Browne. By Jonathan Stroud. Read by Sophie Aldred. 2021. 12.5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593460122). Gr. 5–9.

While marauding an overturned bus, Scarlett discovers Albert. Soon, they are on the run for their lives. Narrator Aldred provides a full cast of characters with a wide range of accents.

Booklist Backlist

The Redoubtable Miss Marple

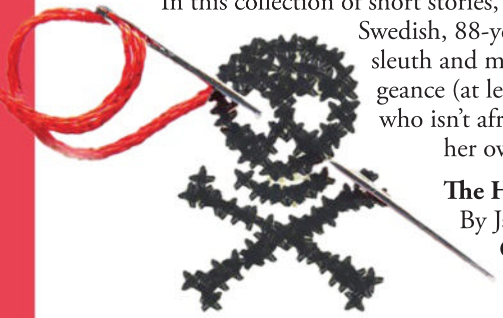
By John Charles



Downstairs in the lounge, by the third pillar from the left, there sits an old lady with a sweet, placid, spinsterish face and a mind that has plumbed the depths of human iniquity and taken it all in the day's work. Her name's Miss Marple.” First introduced to readers in a short story her creator, Agatha Christie, wrote for *The Royal Magazine* in 1927, then appearing in *The Murder at the Vicarage* in 1930, Jane Marple would go on to become one of Christie's most popular sleuths, appearing in 12 novels and 20 short stories, using her knowledge of the residents of her village, St. Mary Mead, as a metric to solve a number of fiendishly clever crimes that often had the professionals involved at their wits' ends. Now more than 45 years after her final case, *Sleeping Murder*, Jane Marple is back in *Marple* (2022), a collection of 12 short stories written by a dozen of today's most acclaimed crime-fiction writers. But while Miss Marple may be the undisputed queen of crafty little-old-lady detectives, as the books below illustrate, plenty of other similarly unlikely sleuths have followed in her sensibly trod footsteps.

Aunty Lee's Delights. By Ovidia Yu. 2013. Morrow.

When a body turns up at one of Singapore's tourist sites at the same time a guest goes missing from one of her dinner parties, widow and restaurant owner Rosie “Aunty” Lee starts connecting the dots.



An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good. By Helene Tursten. 2018. Soho Crime.

In this collection of short stories, seemingly innocent, Swedish, 88-year-old Maud is less sleuth and more instrument of vengeance (at least in her own mind), who isn't afraid to take justice into her own hands.

The Hour of Death. By Jane Willan. 2018. Crooked Lane.

Welsh Anglican nun (and aspiring mystery writer) Sister Agatha gets some real-world experience with solving a murder when one of the local village residents winds up dead in the church hall right before the annual art show.

Jane Darrowfield, Professional Busybody. By Barbara Ross. 2020. Kensington.

After developing a reputation for discreetly fixing “problems,” recently retired Jane Darrowfield is hired to cool down the hostilities between rival cliques at a retirement home, but things stay heated when a body turns up on the golf course.

The Marlowe Murder Club. By Robert Thorogood. 2022. Poisoned Pen Press.

When the local police refuse to believe crossword-puzzle-solving, whisky-drinking, 77-year-old Judith Potts saw a murder being committed, she (with some help from her friends) sets out to solve the case.

Meet Isabel Puddles. By M. V. Byrne. 2020. Kensington.

In order to meet the rising cost of living, Michigan widow Isabel Puddles takes a part-time job working as a hairdresser at a funeral home, which is where she discovers someone hammered a nail into the head of wealthy farmer Earl Jonasson.

Murder She Wrote: Killer on the Court. By Jessica Fletcher and Terri Farley Moran. 2022. Berkley.

In the latest fictional adventure for television's beloved cozy sleuth, Jessica Fletcher finds her plans to spend a relaxing vacation with her nephew and his family interrupted by a body on the local tennis court. In a case of six degrees of Christie separation, before becoming Jessica Fletcher on television, Angela Lansbury starred as Miss Marple in a made-for-television adaptation of *The Mirror Cracked*.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency. By Alexander McCall Smith. 2003. Anchor.

While Mma Precious Ramotswe has a long way to go before she can be considered a little old lady, the manner in which this Botswana sleuth and owner of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency employs her knowledge of her new hometown of Gaborone and its residents to solve a number of different crimes rivals that of Miss Marple and her beloved St. Mary Mead.

The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan. By Stuart Palmer. 2018. American Mystery Classics.

Full-time schoolteacher and part-time amateur sleuth Miss Hildegarde Withers goes to Hollywood, where her job as an advisor on the set of a movie about Lizzie Borden is about to be derailed by the murder of a screenwriter. Introduced to readers in the 1930s, vinegary spinster Hildegarde Withers went on to star in 14 novels, some of which also made their way to Hollywood.

The Thursday Murder Club. By Richard Osman. 2020. Pamela Dorman Books.

Elizabeth, Joyce, Ibrahim, and Ron, four septuagenarian residents of Cooper's Chase, a high-end retirement development and the charter members of the Thursday Murder Club, use their unique skills to help a newbie police officer solve the murder of a local contractor.

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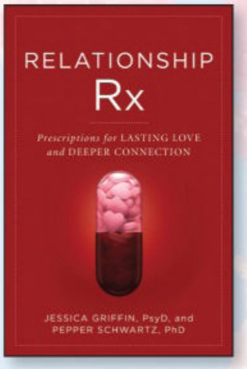
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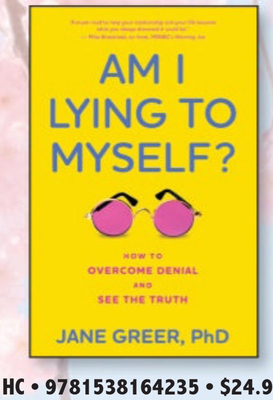
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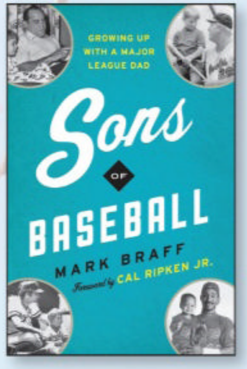
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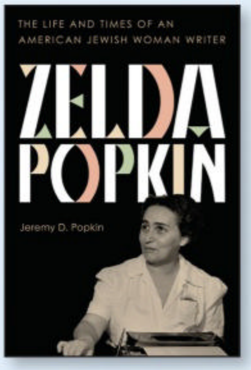
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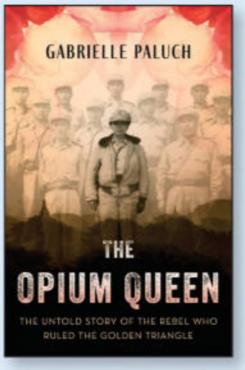
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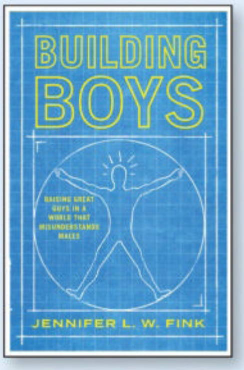
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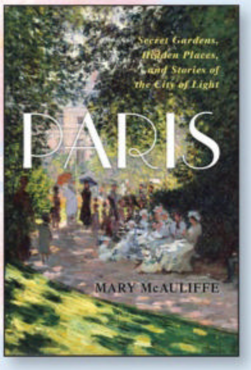
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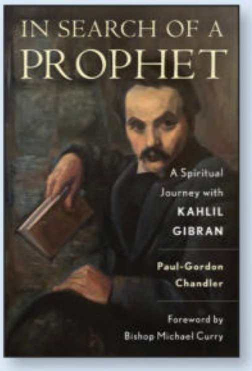
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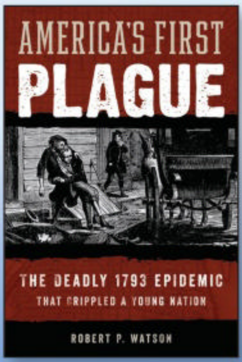
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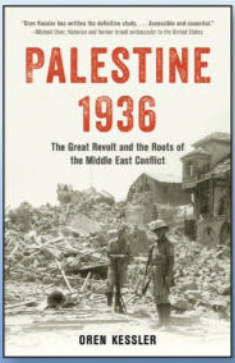
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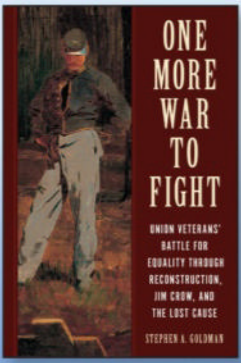
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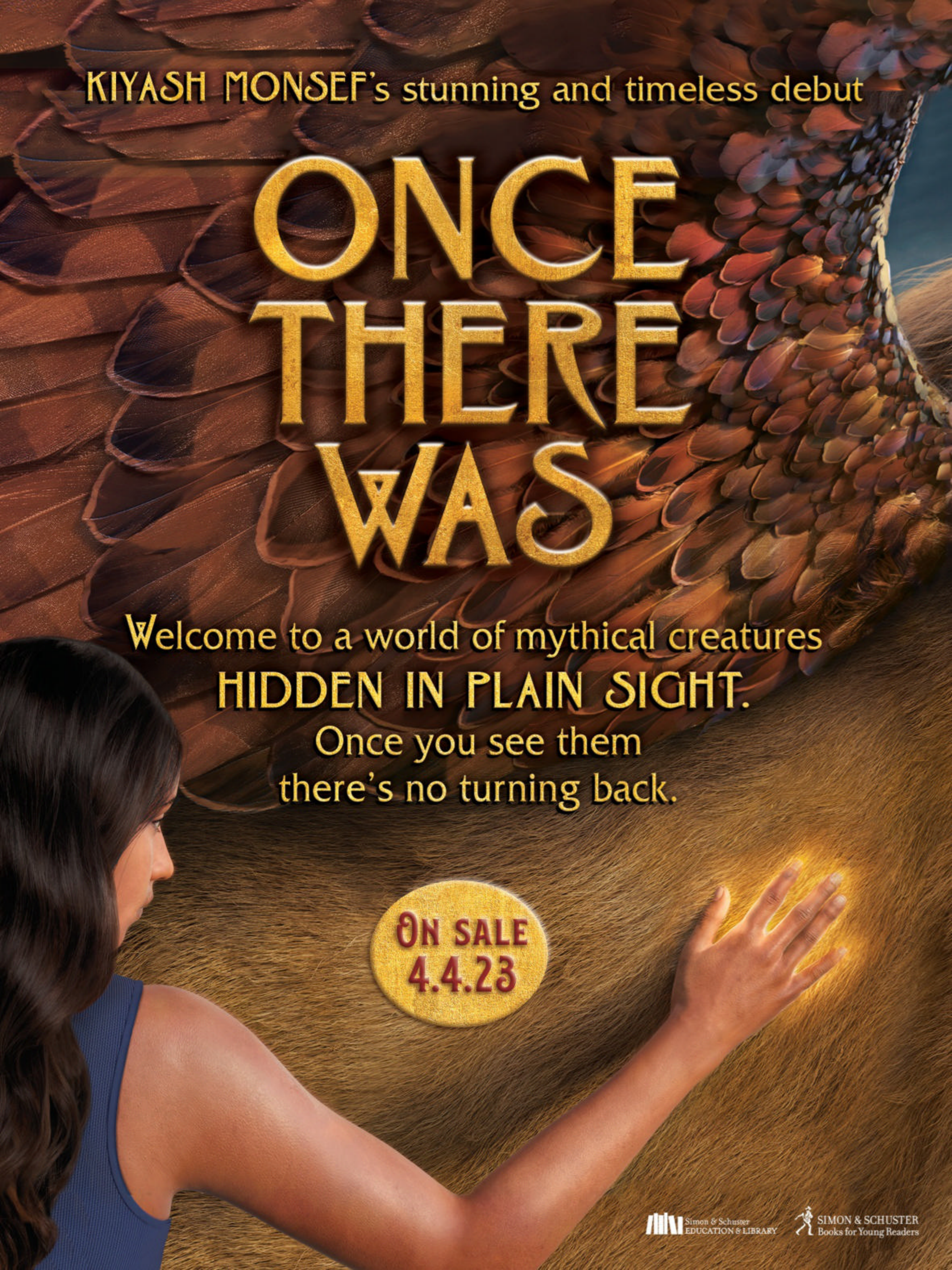

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